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LEXICAL AND SYNTACTIC CAUSATIVES IN NEWARI¹

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At least four papers on causative constructions in the languages of Nepal have been presented in the past Annual Conferences and Seminars of the Linguistic Society of Nepal: Bhaskarao and Joshi on "Causation, Supervision and Presence in Newari" (1982); Malla on "Suppletive Causatives in Newari" (1983); Yadav on "Causativization in Maithili: A Preliminary Enquiry" (1984); and Bandhu on "Causativization in Nepali" (1985). The present paper on the lexical and syntactic causatives in Newari does not seek to argue against any of these papers but is an attempt to examine how morphological processes affect the complex patterns of causative formations in the language.

I. The formation of causatives in Newari is normally achieved by the affixation of a bound morpheme -k (with surface variants -k-i, -k-e, -k-a, -k-al-a) and the addition of an appropriate argument. In the examples that follow, AGR stands for Agreement, ERG for Ergative marker, INF for Infinitive verb form, SF for Stem Formative, PERM for Permissive auxiliary, and PD for Past Disjunct:

- (1) a. duru dā - l - a
milk boil-SF-PD
'The milk boiled.'
- b. Ritā-Ā duru dā - e - k - al - a
NOM-ERG milk boil-INF-CAUS-SF-PD
'Rita made the milk boil.' ('Rita boiled the milk.')

The affixation of an additional -k and an argument to an already causativised form results in a multiple causative:

- (2) Rita-Ā Mirā-yāta duru dā - e - k - e bi: - k - aI - a
 NOM-ERG NOM-AGR milk boil-INF-CAUS-INF PERM-CAUS-
 SF-PD

'Rita made Mira boil the milk.'

As shown in Kansakar (1982) and Malla (1985) 'the causative form of a root/compound verb is nearly regularly predictable on the basis of (a) morphological class of the verb, and (b) the vowel of the final syllable of the root/stem.' According to this classification the inflectional categories for causatives at the systematic phonemic and at the phonetic levels show a good deal of regularity for all classes of verbs. Malla (1983, 1985) has also cited some pairs of verbs with marked causative/non-causative distinctions without requiring the additional causative morpheme -k. These verbs alternate in voicing and aspiration, i.e. the voiced unaspirated C of the simple verb is devoiced and aspirated in the causative counterpart:

- | | | | |
|-----------|---------------|-----------|-----------------|
| (3) bā-ye | 'to separate' | phā-ye | 'make separate' |
| gyā-ye | 'be afraid' | khyā-ye | 'make afraid' |
| dan-e | 'to stand' | than-e | 'make stand' |
| ko-ji-ye | 'to decide' | ko-chi-ye | 'make decide' |

This device of causative formation is often referred to as 'suppletive causatives' which Malla (1985) regards as conclusive that Newari historically was a language with prefixes. In other words, the suppletive causatives provide strong evidence of the existence of a prefixal system which affects voicing, aspiration or tone. It was perhaps on the basis of such evidence that TB-linguists such as Shafer (1966), Benedict (1972) and Matisoff (1976) working on various Sino-Tibetan languages posited a Proto-TB sibilant prefix *s- which we assume performed a very positive function in the causativization of the verb.²

II. The formation of causatives in Newari is also interesting from a syntactic point of view in that the causative action can be extended to a number of agentive nominals in the resultant causative construction. Thus, the number of agentive nominals that can occur seems to depend on the degree of transitivity of the causative verb, e.g.

- (4) a. cwo-k-e 'make write' (< cwo-ye 'write') (Transitive)
 Shyam-A tha: k̄ae-yāta dhayā: Mirā-Ā wo-ya pāsā-yāta
 NOM-ERG his son-AGR tell NOM-ERG her friend-AGR
 cithi cha - pu cwo - k - al - a
 letter NUM - CLF write-CAUS-SF-PD
 'Shyam, by telling his own son, had Mira write a letter to her friend.'
 (4 agentives)
- b. bi:-k-e 'make give' (< bi-ye 'give') (Bitransitive)
 ji-I Mirā-yāta saphu: cha - gu bi: - k - ā
 I-ERG NOM-AGR book NUM - CLF give-CAUS-PC
 'I had a book given to Mira.'
 (3 agentives)
- c. bwā-k-e 'make run' (< bwā-ye 'run') (Semi-transitive)
 Ritā-Ā macā-yāta bwā - k - al - a
 NOM-ERG child-AGR run-CAUS-SF-PD
 'Rita made the child run.'
 (2 agentives)
- d. dā-e-k-e 'make boil' (< dā-ye 'boil') (Intransitive)
 Ritā-Ā duru dā- e - k - al - a
 NOM-ERG milk boil-INF-CAUS-SF-PD
 'Rita boiled the milk.'
 (1 agentive)

On the other hand, this phenomenon also explains the formation of multiple causatives where the causative morpheme -k is affixed to a causativised form and an additional agentive argument is added. The examples in (5) show that the number of causative morphemes correlates with the number of agentive nominals in a sentence:

- (5) a. Ritā-Ā Mirā-yāta duru dā - e - k - e bi: - k - al - a
 NOM-ERG NOM - AGR milk boil-INF-CAUS-INF PERM-CAUS-SF-PD
 'Rita made Mira boil the milk.' (2 agentives, 2 CAUS-k's)
- b. Ritā-Ā macā-yāta bwā - k - e cho - k - e bi: - k - al - a
 NOM-ERG child-AGR run-CAUS-INF send-CAUS-INF-PERM-CAS-SF-PD
 'Rita made (someone) make the child run.'
 (3 agentives, 3 CAUS-k's)

While it is appealing to analyze causative sentences in terms of 'agentives' and 'causative morphemes', there are some syntactic problems in

this approach. Firstly, we cannot very well say that the subjects of all so-called 'semi-transitives' like "run", "cry" or "be angry" have actually agentive roles. For example, from a semantic/thematic point of view, the subject of the semi-transitive *tA:cā-ye/tA:mwo-ye* 'be angry' is no more an agent than the subject of intransitive verbs like *den-e* 'to sleep' or *da-ye* 'to boil'.

(6) <i>tA:cā-ye</i>	'be angry'	→	<i>tA:cā-e-k-e</i>	'make angry'
<i>dā-ye</i>	'to boil'	→	<i>dā-e-k-e</i>	'make boil'
<i>den-e</i>	'to sleep'	→	<i>then-e</i>	'make sleep'

Furthermore the subjects of transitive verbs of perception ('hear', 'see' etc) which normally have the thematic role of 'experiencer' rather than 'agent' can also form their causative with; two causative morphemes.

(7) <i>nen-e</i>	'hear'	→	<i>nE:-k-e / nE:-k-ā bi:-k-e</i>	'make hear'
<i>khan-e</i>	'see'	→	<i>khA:-k-e / khA:-k-ā bi:-k-e</i>	'make see'

III. Second, the addition of a -k morpheme to an already causativized form does not always correspond to the addition of another agentive nominal. A comparison of the examples in (8) would make this point clear. The addition of a -k morpheme in (8b), for example, serves to bring out the intentional nature of the action rather than add another agentive argument (where INT stands for 'causative - intensifier'):

- (8) a. *wo - O: tho khA si: - k - al - a*
 NOM-ERG this matter know-CAUS-SF-PD
 'He came to know about this matter.' (by chance)
- b. *wo - O: tho khA si: - k - ā k - āl - a*
 NOM-ERG this matter know-CAUS-PD-INT-SF-PD
 'He came to know about this matter.' (by effort)

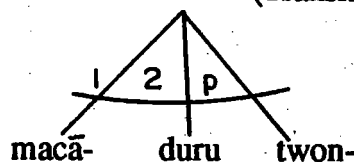
The first problem (i.e. subject vs agent) can be handled by looking at the causative constructions in terms of grammatical relations rather than thematic roles. In other words, I suggest that the correlation is really between causative actions and grammatical subjects rather than between causative morphemes and thematic agents.

In line with this approach we can specify three classes of verbs in Newari: (a) transitive, i.e. verbs that select an initial subject and direct object; (b) unergative, i.e. verbs that select an initial subject only; and (c) unaccusative, i.e. verbs whose single argument is initially a direct object.

Using the relational grammar framework of Perlmutter (1980), the relational network of clauses containing each of these three classes of verbs can be represented as in (9), where the notation 1 is for subject, 2 for DO and P for Predicate:

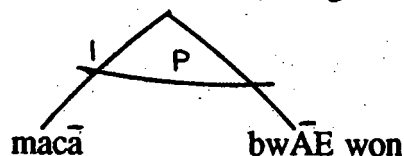
- (9) a. macā-Ā duru twon - a
NOM-ERG milk drink-PD
'The child drank the milk.'

(Transitive)



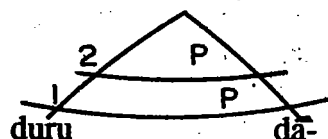
- b. macā bwĀE won - a
NOM run go-PD
'The child ran.'

(Unergative)



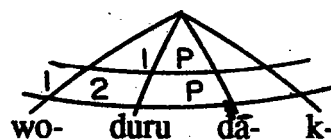
- c. duru dā - l - a
milk boil-SF-PD
'The milk boiled.'

(Unaccusative)

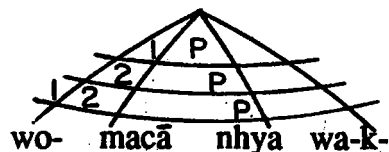


In (9c) the nominal *duru* can be the grammatical subject but is actually a logical DO of *da-l-a* 'boiled'. Underlyingly, *da-ye* 'to boil' and verbs of this class are subjectless. Although (9b) unergative and (9c) unaccusative are structurally similar, we can assume that they are grammatically distinct. In terms of language-specific rules an unergative is opposed to an unaccusative verb.

- (10) a. wo-O: duru dā-e-k-al-a
'He made the milk boil.'



- b. wo-O: macā-yāta nhya: wa-e-k-ā bi-l-a
'He made the child sleepy.'



The causative constructions in (10a) and (10b) both have the causative morpheme as part of the predicate but grammatically these are not identical. In *duru da-l-a* 'The milk boiled' and *maca-ya nhyā: wo-l-a* 'The child was sleepy' the subjects of the embedded predicate (when present) can be interpreted as the direct object, while the examples are causativized by introducing an additional subject argument into the clause. Thus, 'He made the milk boil' and 'He made the child sleepy' do not bear the same grammatical relation. It is precisely for this reason that we have recognized the three classes of verbs in (9) as relevant to the grammar of Newari causatives.

The second problem referred to in Section III above has to do with causative constructions which add a causative morpheme but do not add an agentive argument. The examples in (8) thus can be described as 'causative - intensive' (INT-k) constructions which may provide important evidence for distinguishing accurately the nature of causative phenomena in Newari and other TB-languages of Nepal. While -k usually functions as a causative marker attached to a number of underlying grammatical subjects, it can, as was shown above in (8), serve as an intensifier. Further examples of this can be seen in (11):

- (11) a. *Ritā-Ā Mirā-yāta wosa: hi: - k - al -*
 NOM-ERG NOM -AGR clothes wash-CAUS-SF-PD
 'Rita made Mira wash the clothes.'
- b. *Ritā-Ā Mirā-yāta wosa: hi: - k - e bi: - k - al - a*
 NOM-ERG NOM - AGR clothes wash - CAUSE - INF
 PERM-INT-SF-PD
 'Rita made Mira make the clothes to be washed.'
- c. *Ritā-Ā Mirā-yāta wosa: hi: - k - e māe - k - e*
 NOM-ERG NOM - AGR clothes wash - CAUS - INF need -
 INT-INF
bi: - k - al - a
 PERM - INT - SF - PD
 'Rita forced Mira to have the clothes washed.'

What we have called an intensifier of causatives (INT-k) is essentially the same morpheme as CAUS-k, but the two are introduced by distinct processes and have different grammatical consequences.³ The addition of a -k to a causative verb normally requires the addition of a subject/agentive argument and this, as we have seen, produces a multiple causative. The

causative-intensive construction, on the other hand, increase the force of the causative argument by reduplicating the -k of a main causative verb unto a string of auxiliaries. In these constructions the number of CAUS-k's (or INT-k's) do not therefore match the number of grammatical subjects as in (4 a-d) above.

IV. The function of causative - intensive as a reduplicative process *may* have further support from cross-linguistic comparisons. Like Newari, a number of TB-languages of Nepal - among them Thakali, Chepang, W.Tamang, Sunwar and Khaling - form their causative by inflecting a verb stem with various causative affixes. Some examples from these languages are provided in (12):

(12):	move	cause to move
Thakali	'prah-la	'prah-la- <u>ttan</u> -la
Tamang	kor-pa	kor- <u>nala</u> -pa
Chepang	chyu? saa	chyu?saa-' <u>taak</u>
Sunwar	duuk-tsa	duuk-' <u>payh</u> -tsa
Khaling	thu-ne	thu- <u>man</u> -ne

What is not clear at the moment is whether these languages also have a reduplication of the causative morpheme as an intensifier marker. In Newari it is clear that the INT-k is necessarily restricted to causative verbs since it is the causative morpheme which is reduplicated and not the verb stem.

We have examined in this paper the causative construction in Newari with reference to (a) initial grammatical relations and (b) lexical and syntactic affixation. In the first case, we identified the causative predicate as a bound morpheme and showed that the number of -k affixes in a causative sentence would depend on the number of its initial (logical) subjects. Thus, causatives formed with transitive or unergative stems can have two or more -k morphemes, while those formed with unaccusative stems contain only one. In the second case, we have noted that the causative morpheme can combine lexically with a certain class of predicates, e.g. the unaccusative verb *tajyā-ye* 'be broken' has an initial DO only, but its causative form *tachyā-ye* / *tachyā-k-e* 'cause to break' requires the initial 1 and 2 (i.e. subject and DO). Here the causative form serves as a transitivizing affix, deriving a transitive verb *tachyā-ye* from the intransitive *tajyā-ye*. On the other hand, the formation of *gan-k-e* 'make dry' from *gan-e* 'dry' involves the syntactic affixation of a CAUS-k to a clause. The two sets can be seen in (13) below:

- (13) a. cya:-nA syI gan - k - al - a
NOM-ERG wood dry-CAUS - SF - PD
'The servant made the wood dry.'

- b. cya:-nA bhega: tachyā - t - a
NOM-ERG pot break - SF - PD
'The servant broke the pot.'

We see that (13a) is a syntactically derived causative 'union' construction, while (13b) is a simple transitive clause containing a single predicate.

Further, we said that the syntactically affixed -k morpheme can then undergo reduplication to form a causative-intensive. Such reduplication in effect would take place in the lexicon although derived by syntactic rules. We can on this basis formulate two tentative rules:

- (14) a. The syntactically causativized forms have initially the affixation of a single -k morpheme which has a transitivity function in a clause.
- b. The lexically produced 'causatives' operate on the output of syntactic rules and can undergo further causativization by affixation of additional CAUS-k's including INT-k's. The intensive/reduplicative causative however depends on the presence of an auxiliary verb in the verb string.

Notes

1. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 10th Annual Conference of the Linguistic Society of Nepal on 26th November, 1989. I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Austin Hale for his valuable comments and suggestions on the first draft of the paper.
2. A part of the evidence also rests upon the actual s-prefix in written Tibetan, and the s-prefix in conservative languages. Kham, for example, has an s-prefix that may have descended from the Proto-TB form.
3. The CAUS-k and reduplicating -k do not change the surface form of the verb stems in (11 a-c) but the causative effects of the constructions differ. While $2 + 2$ and 2×2 give us the same result, the operations involved are different.

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AN ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH TO RITUAL RANKING AMONG THE SATAR

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Introduction

Caste is the dominant social system of Nepal. Due to constant interaction between the caste and non-caste people, the hierarchical values of caste system has influenced the behavior of the non-caste people as well. This paper presents the methodology used in determining the influence of caste hierarchy among the Satar of southern Nepal in defining themselves within the larger Satar group and between the Satar and caste groups. It further examines the implications of such influence on the Satar social system. The preliminary fieldwork was carried out for 4 months in January-May, 1985 and the follow-up intensive fieldwork was done for 15 months in 1976-78. This article, however, is based on the first one.

Setting

The Satar and caste people presented in this paper live in Sunauli, a village situated about six miles east of the industrial town of Biratnagar of southern Nepal. Sunauli is one of the eight villages of Sisbani Panchayat. These villages are populated either by a majority of Satar or caste people. Sunauli and its three neighbouring villages include both caste and Satar population. Although both groups are endogamous and patrilineal, they are ethnically and culturally different. Their dress and religious practices differ. Both the Satar and caste people speak entirely different languages. Satari language, spoken by the Satar, belongs to the Munda family of Austro-Asiatic language group. Maithili, spoken by the 90% of the caste people, belongs to the Indo-Aryan language group. The other 10% of the caste people are Nepali Bahun who speak Nepali.

Further, hierarchy is the distinguishing feature of the caste groups, whereas the Satar tradition values egalitarianism. These different ideologies

have affected the quality of interpersonal relations of the members belonging to each of these groups. Members of caste groups believe that their relations with others in and out of their groups must be arranged in an order of dominance and deference, from higher to lower.¹ This is evident from the hierarchichal categories of the Bahuns of the neighboring villages. They order all the caste groups of Nepal into three categories. The first one is *Mathillo Jaat* which includes upper caste people, especially the Bahun and Chetri, who are Hindu. The second in order is *Pani Chalne Jaat* which refers to those caste people from whom water can be accepted, meaning that they are touchable. These people can be Hindu or Buddhist. These Bahuns call some people of this category *Matwali* because they (*Matwali*) use alcoholic beverages in their formal and informal rituals.² The third category consists of *Pani Nachalne Jaat*. It includes those people from whom water can not be accepted, meaning that they are untouchable. These people can be Hindu, or non-Hindu.³

Satar, in contrast, tend to see their society as held together by kinship bonds and do not insist on hierarchical ordering. Because of such ordering of social relations, Satar tend to live with or closer to the other members of their groups. The caste people, in contrast, prefer their village to have a culturally heterogeneous population which includes not only other caste people, but other ethnic groups as well:

In spite of these differences, the Satar and the caste people of Sunauli and its vicinity constantly interact with each other. Their contexts of interaction extend from a narrow to a wider range from the village to the town. Further, these contexts are formal and informal, secular and ritual - such as village meetings and festivals, weekly markets, and pilgrimages - which provide ample opportunities for the groups to foster interaction with each other.

Sunauli appears strikingly different from its neighbouring villages in the balance of its population. It has a total population of 376 of which 170 are Satar and 176 are caste people. As is shown in Table 1, Sunauli has sixty households - twenty-seven belonging to the Satar and thirty-three belonging to the caste people.

Table 1: Ethnic Population of the Satar villages

Villages	Satar		Caste	
	population	household	population	household
Birta	45	8	7	2
Kadmaha	47	8	4	1
Kashipur	61	12	8	4
Sunauli	170	27	176	33

There are eleven caste groups in Sunauli. Table 2 explains the distribution of caste population by gender and households. Among all the caste groups the Nunia group is numerically dominant. Also, only the Nunia are divided into two sub-castes - Rajbhar Nunia and Chauhan Nunia.

The Satar comprise the other half of the population of Sunauli. They are divided into nine patrilineal clans. The distribution of their population according to clans and gender is presented in table 3.

The Satar have an egalitarian ideology. This ideology is expressed in various contexts- religious, political, and social. Their egalitarianism, however, is not practiced to the full extent today in Sunauli. This is evident from their economic classes which divide them into rich and poor, and the ritual hierarchy, modelled after the caste hierarchy, which separates them into pure and impure categories. As I have mentioned elsewhere (1990), in native terms, these categories are- Sapha Hod, Bidin Hod, and the Kristan Hod- the Sapha Hod having the highest level of purity and the Christian Satar having lowest one. These categories are further divided into two broad religious categories- Hindu and Christian. In this, the Sapha Hod and the Bidin Hod define themselves as Hindu and perceive themselves as different from the Christian Satar. The Bidin Hod and the Sapha Hod share the view of their caste neighbors that there are only two *Jaat* (kinds of people) on this earth - Hindu and Muslim- and all those who are not Hindu are either Muslim or like the Muslim (Figure 1). Accordingly, they perceive Christians and the Christian Satar as belonging to the Muslim *Jaat*. And since these Bidin Hod and the Sapha Hod do not think of themselves as Muslim, they define themselves as Hindu. Both of them use the label Hindu to distinguish themselves from the Muslims whom they consider outsiders and, therefore, untouchables (See Gaborieau 1972: 84-105 for the ritual status of Muslims in Nepal).

Table 2: Distribution of Caste Population by Gender and Household

Castes	Households	Female	Male	Total
Nunia (Chauhan and Rajbhar)	11	27	25	52
Mohali	8	20	16	36
Kiyat	2	9	8	17
Teli	3	4	10	14
Kevarat	1	7	6	13
Sonar	2	6	6	12
Gangai	1	4	6	10
Chamar	1	6	3	9
Halwai	1	3	5	8
Dhanuk	1	1	1	2
Kurmi	1	1	1	2
?	1	0	1	1
	33	88	88	176

Table 3: Distribution of the Satar population by gender and clan

clans	female	male	total
Marndi	23	18	41
Soren	16	16	32
Murmu	15	8	23
Tudu	10	11	21
Hemram	9	9	18
Hansdak	6	13	19
Baske	4	4	8
Kisku	4	2	6
Paunri	0	1	1
?	1	0	1
	88	82	170

In spite of these hierarchies, the Satar of Sunauli constantly emphasize their egalitarian values and deny that any such hierarchy exists. The apparent inconsistency between the Satar's claim of egalitarianism and the reality of the village's social structure led me to administer a "self-ranking" task among the Satar and caste people. The objective of the ranking task was to determine the prevalence of caste values among the Satar. The

other purpose was to identify the criteria used in ranking and in the maintenance of boundaries of each category and group.

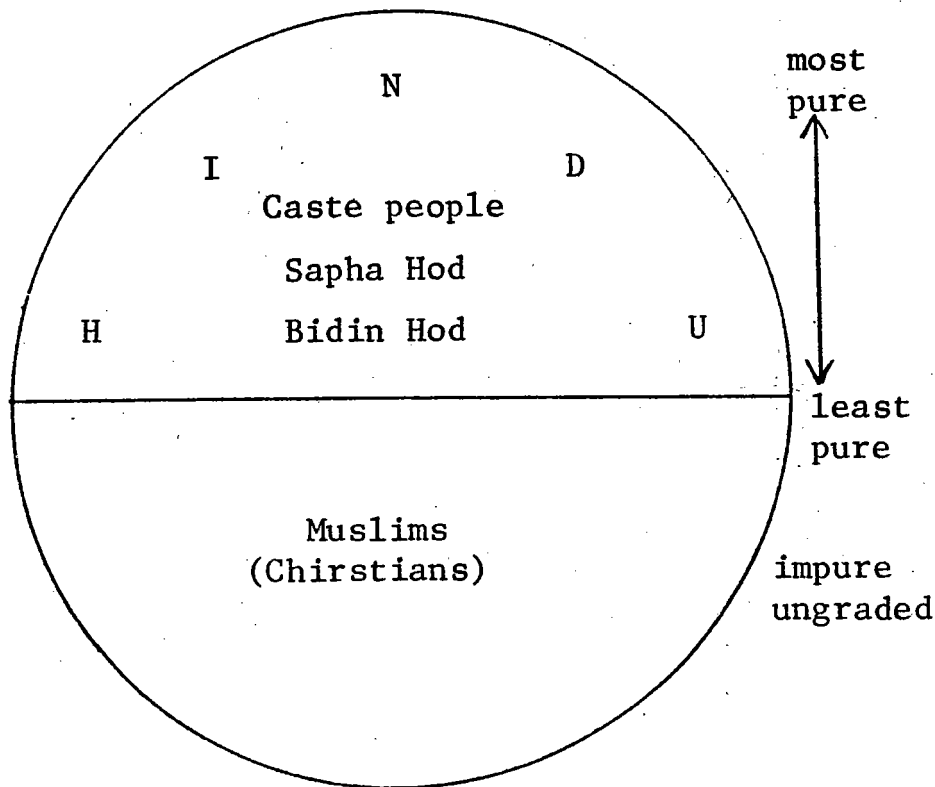


Figure 1: World-view of the Satar and the caste people

Methodology

I followed Silverman's (1966) model in conducting the ranking task. First, I discussed the different ritual categories of the Satar group and the caste groups with six elderly Satar and two caste men. These men belonged to different ritual and class categories within their larger Satar and caste groups. I could not include women in this discussion because they were very reluctant to talk about ranking at this early stage. Then I wrote down the names of these categories and the names of the caste groups on separate cards, and asked my informants to sort them in a "ranking order" from "higher" to "lower". At the end of each task, I asked open ended questions (Pelto and Pelto 1970/1979) of each informant about his criteria of ranking the Satar and the caste groups of Sunauli. Each talked about the importance of political, economic, ritual, and educational factors but unanimously agreed that the ritual criterion of *Sapha/non-Sapha* (pure/impure) played the key role in determining an individual's status. Such criterion of hierarchy has also

been examined by some Indianists in their studies of caste system (Dumont 1966/1980; Gough 1960; Marriott 1968/1970).

Now that I was quite clear about the range of specific responses for this ranking task, I wrote down the criteria of ranking in the following order-economic, political, ritual, occupational (government or any office job), and educational, and asked my informants to choose one or more of them. The purpose of such closed question was both to save time and get accurate answers. For this project, I hired two assistants - a Satar and a caste. Both of them worked with the literate members of Sunauli and its surrounding villages while I worked with the illiterate ones. I followed up this ranking task by interviewing all the informants of Sunauli, literate and illiterate, eight years old and above, concerning their criteria used in ranking as well as in maintaining the boundaries of their own social groups.

Factors relating to ranking

The variables which played a significant role in ranking both within and between groups were age, class, gender, ritual status, and ethnicity. Children (between the age of 8-14) of both groups possessed little knowledge about the relative statuses of the caste groups. However, while the caste children could rank a few caste groups of Sunauli, especially their status in relation to the Mohali and the Chamar, the Satar children could not.

Among men, older men could rank more caste groups than the younger ones. I encountered some problem in the beginning with the young men (age 15-30) of both groups. These men did not cooperate with me by insisting that all villagers were of equal status, and that they did not believe in the relative superiority or inferiority of caste groups. These young men expressed this belief of equality by eating together, especially boiled rice and meat or fish, in various informal contexts. However, as I continued interviewing the older people, this situation changed, and the young men took interest in ranking their caste groups. Caste men took this task more seriously and were more concerned about it than the Satar men of the same age category. Although the caste men still overtly denied their belief in the ritual hierarchy, they participated fully in this task "for the sake of their children" so that their children would know about their own ritual status in order to marry within their own caste groups. These caste men could rank all the caste groups of Sunauli and the Satar as well. Although most of them agreed to the lower status of the Satar than that of the caste groups, none of them agreed with each other in the relative statuses of the various caste groups. Further, the members of each caste considered their own ritual status to be higher than that of other caste groups.

Among the Satar, ethnicity, class, ritual and religious identities were meaningful in ranking. As I will demonstrate later in this paper, Satar verbally deny viewing themselves as being a part of the caste society at any level. During my informal interviews with them, they repeatedly expressed their ignorance about the caste groups and their relationship with them in terms of each other's ritual statuses. The data gathered through the ranking task, however, point in another direction. In this task, most of the Satar ranked Bahuns as having the highest ritual status

Table 4: Satar ranking themselves with the Diku

Population by	higher than	lower than	no
gender and class (age 8 and above)	Diku (N= 97)	Diku (N= 32)	respond (N= 10)
Total population (N= 139)	70 %	23%	7%
Female (N= 74)	70%	24%	6%
Male (N= 65)	69%	22%	9%
Upper class (N= 18)	67%	28%	5%
Female (N= 10)	70%	30%	0%
Male (N= 8)	62%	0%	38%
Lower class (N= 121)	68%	22%	10%
Female (N= 65)	69%	23%	8%
Male (N= 56)	70%	19%	11%

Table 5: Satar ranking the caste groups of Sunauli

Population by	ranking more	ranking less	no
gender and class (age 8 and above)	than four caste groups (N= 61)	than four caste groups (N= 68)	respond (N= 10)
Total population (N= 139)	44%	49%	7%
Female (N= 74)	31%	62%	7%
Male (N= 65)	57%	33%	10%

Upper class (N= 18)	61%	11%	28%
Female (N= 10)	50%	50%	0%
Male (N= 8)	75%	25%	0%
Lower class (N= 121)	40%	47%	13%
Female (N= 65)	26%	65%	9%
Male (N= 56)	59%	30%	11%

in the caste hierarchy. While ranking themselves with the caste groups of Sunauli (Diku)⁴, 70% of the Satar men and women of both classes ranked their ethnic group as higher than all the caste groups. 23% of them ranked themselves as higher than the Mohali and the Chamar but lower than the rest of the caste groups (Table 4).

These Satar could also grade the caste groups in an hierarchical order. Of 139 Satar, 44% could rank more than four castes of Sunauli and 49% could rank at least the caste groups of the Teli, Mohali and Chamar (Table 5). This 49% labeled the rest of caste people as *Diku* and could not rank them at all.

As Table 5 illustrates, class differences were also significant in such ranking. Upper class people, both male and female, could rank more than four caste groups of Sunauli. The upper class Satar were educated and multilingual. They exerted their power in various ritual and secular contexts. They had large amount of land holdings and they always entertained their urban guests, especially the government officials and the police. These wealthy Satar frequently visited the nearby town Biratnagar, and were in constant interaction with the caste people of the wider region. Because of their contact and continuous interaction with these caste people, the upper class people were more aware of the dominance of caste system and the ritual differences existing between the caste groups of the Sunauli.

Religious identity was the other salient factor among the Satar in ranking themselves within their group. As the data indicate, more than 80% of the Sapha Hod and the Bidin Hod ranked themselves as higher than the Christian Satar (Table 6). To repeat again, these Hindu Satar considered themselves as higher in the level of purity. They designated the Christian Satar as lowest in ritual status and, therefore, untouchable.

Gender difference also appeared significant in such ranking. More upper class men than women could rank more than four caste groups of Sunauli. Although this is a significant point, its discussion is not covered in this paper. Further research is needed to examine the gender identities of the Satar and the caste people.

Women also participated in ranking the Satar and caste groups. Among these women, the caste women were able to rank most of the caste groups of Sunauli. These women, like all the caste men and children, ranked the caste groups only along the ritual criterion of purity and impurity. They took a deeper interest in ranking the various caste groups of Sunauli. These caste women firmly believed in ritual inequality, and considered the ritual status of their own caste group as higher than any other caste group of Sunauli. They were also very blunt and open about their own statuses vis a vis each other. Once or twice, such openness in the part of caste women resulted in bitter argument and verbal fights among the members of different caste groups. Although these women showed "tremendous knowledge" about the caste statuses of Sunauli, they knew very little about the ritual categories of the Satar. They viewed all Satar belonging to one social group, and ranked this entire group as untouchable.

Unlike the caste women, most of the Satar women showed their ignorance in ranking the caste groups. As shown in Table 4, they labeled all castes as *Diku* and ranked themselves higher than the caste people by using the criterion of ritual purity and pollution. Among the Satar women one's own ritual status appeared to be significant in ranking others. The higher one's status was within the group, the more tendency one showed to rank other Satar as lower in status. For example, the women of the Sapha Hod households ranked themselves as higher than the other Satar, putting the Bidin Hod in the middle of the ritual hierarchy, and the Christian Satar in the lowest ritual order, the untouchable. These Sapha Hod women also used the criterion of ritual purity and impurity in ranking themselves. Though the women of Bidin Hod households agreed with the untouchable status of the Christian Satar, they disagreed with the Sapha Hod about their own status. These Bidin Hod women considered their own ritual status to be equal to that of the Sapha Hod. Furthermore, the Bidin Hod women used two different criteria for ranking themselves within their ethnic group-the ritual criterion of the caste system to rank the Christian Satar as lowest in status, and the economic criterion of wealth to rank themselves as lower than the Sapha Hod.

Table 6: Satar ranking themselves within their ethnic group

Population by gender and class (age 8 and above)	Hindu Satar higher than Christian Satar (N= 120)	Hindu Satar lower than Christian Satar (N= 9)	No respond (N= 10)
Total population (N= 139)	86%	7%	7%
Female (N= 74)	85%	10%	5%
Male (N= 65)	89%	3%	8%
Upper class (N= 18)	77%	6%	17%
Female (N= 10)	90%	10%	0%
Male (N= 8)	75%	0%	25%
Lower class (N= 121)	81%	10%	9%
Female (N= 65)	78%	12%	10%
Male (N= 56)	88%	5%	7%

Analysis

This ranking task revealed the complexity of the Satar social system. Some of the facts made obvious from this ranking task are as follows. This first one relates to the concept of caste and the extreme and milder forms of ranking the various groups; the second one explains the pervasiveness of the caste values among the Satar; and the third factor relates to the definition of being Hindu. The first two explain how the Satar have incorporated the caste values in defining themselves within and between groups. The third component illustrates their strategy to maintain their group autonomy by labelling themselves as Hindu.

Concept of caste and its forms of ranking

As illustrated by various anthropological literature on caste, it can be studied both as a social group and as a system of social relations. As a system of social relations the distinguishing feature of caste is hierarchy. It divides society into a number of relatively self-contained and segregated units between which the relationship is determined by the hierarchical order. The criterion of such ordering is the ritual status of *Sapha/non-Sapha*.

(purity/pollution). The caste people of Sunauli view themselves as a part of such a system and define their relationship with the members of the other caste groups in a hierarchical way. As a result, one caste group is never perceived as equal to another caste group; it is either higher or lower.

The ranking of caste/Satar groups as higher and lower takes two forms—extreme and mild. These forms, as my data indicate, depend to a great extent on the ritual status of the individual ranking the groups. For example, the higher the ritual status of a caste group is, the more tendency its members have to rank the caste groups in the extreme form of *Sapha/Achoot* (Maithili classification—meaning pure/untouchable) or *Pani Chalne/Pani Nachalne Jaat* (Nepali classification—meaning those caste groups from whom water can or cannot be accepted). In contrast, the lower one's ritual status is, the more tendency one shows to rank other caste groups in the milder form of *Sapha/ non-Sapha* (pure-impure or higher/lower) and not necessarily as *Sapha/Achoot* or *Pani Chalne/Pani Nachalne Jaat*. I will illustrate and discuss this below.

The Bahun informants of the vicinity define themselves as belonging to the *Mathillo Jaat*. They mark all the caste groups of Sunauli, except the Halwai caste group (sweet-maker), and the Satar as *Pani Nachalne Jaat* and maintain a great degree of social distance from them.

The caste people of Sunauli are least influenced by the ranking procedure of their Bahun neighbours. Although they accept the ritual status of the Bahun as the highest in the ritual hierarchy, they do not agree with the Bahun's ranking *them* (the caste group of Sunauli) as *Pani Nachalne Jaat*. My ranking data indicate that most of the caste people of Sunauli (71%) view their status as *Pani chalne* or *Sapha* and follow the extreme ranking pattern of the above Bahun. And, therefore, they rank the caste groups of Sunauli as *Sapha/Achoot* (Table 7). They include the Satar, Mohali and Chamar in their *Achoot* category.

Among the Satar, the Mohali, and the Chamar, the Satar do not agree with the other caste people about their status as lower than that of the caste people. As mentioned earlier, most of them view the caste people's status as lower than their own, and use a milder form of ranking, seeing them as *non-Sapha*. The Mohali and the Chamar, however, do accept their own status as lower in the caste hierarchy. Like other caste people, the members of both these groups consider the status of their own caste group as higher than that of the other's. But unlike these other caste people, the Mohali and the Chamar do not identify each other as *Achoot*. Rather, they use a milder form of ranking in terms of *Sapha/ non-Sapha*.

Table 7: Caste people (excluding the Mohali) ranking caste groups as Achhoot/non-Sapha/equal

Population by gender and class (age 8 and above)	Sapha/ Achhoot (N= 66)	Sapha/ non-Sapha (N= 9)	equal (N= 1)	no respond (N= 17)
Total population (N= 93)	71%	10%	1%	18%
Female (N= 44)	73%	0%	0%	27%
Male (N= 49)	70%	18%	2%	10%
Upper class (N= 27)	74%	15%	7%	4%
Female (N= 12)	83%	0%	0%	17%
Male (N= 15)	67%	13%	7%	13%
Lower class (N= 66)	70%	11%	0%	19%
Female (N= 32)	78%	0%	0%	22%
Male (N= 34)	71%	21%	0%	8%

These data indicate how much the ritual criterion of purity/pollution governs the caste people's behavior in defining their social relationships with each other in hierarchical terms. They view each caste group as separate from the other and consider it their goal to maintain the purity of their own caste group. Two ways in which this is done in Sunauli is by observing the rules of commensality (not sharing certain boiled or fried food with other caste people) and by practicing endogamy. Endogamy is also practiced by the members of two subcastes of the Nunia caste group.

Members of each of these subcaste groups marry among themselves, not with other members of their larger caste group. Such marriage practices enable the caste people to remain *Sapha* by not mixing their blood and semen with the members of other caste groups (see Inden 1976 and Marriott 1976 for Hindu views about bodily substances). This practice also separates them from other caste groups. This separateness is then further symbolized and acted out through various rules of commensality, as is also demonstrated by Marriott in his study of Kishangadhi people (1968/1970).

Pervasiveness of caste values

Another factor that becomes obvious from the self-ranking task is the perpetuation of the caste values among the egalitarian Satar. My data indicate that despite their verbal denial of being in the caste system, the Satar view the caste system as all pervasive and encompassing. Constant interaction with the caste people, both in and out of Sunauli, and the tension and conflicts emerging from such interaction, also provide a base for the Satar to view the caste system as the dominant social system of Nepal. This view of the caste system influences their behaviour in ranking themselves not only with their caste neighbours, but also with the members of their own ethnic group. They reveal the values of the caste system in ranking themselves within the larger Satar group. For example, the Sapha Hod deny being a part of the caste system and deny being untouchable but designate the Bidin Hod as belonging to a lower ritual status and the Christian Satar as untouchable. Although the Bidin Hod do not agree with the Sapha Hod's claim to be ritually higher in status, they do agree with them that Christian Satar are untouchable and ritually lower in status than both the Sapha Hod and the Bidin Hod.

Such implicit consensus with the hierarchical values of the caste system which serves to define their intergroups and intragroup relations is prevalent among the Christian Satar as well.⁵ Although the Christian Satar do not agree with the Sapha Hod and the Bidin Hod ranking of them as untouchable, they do view themselves within a hierarchical scheme. As Christians, they deny being Hindu or being a part of the caste system, but do rank themselves with a few other caste groups. In this ranking, they consider the Mohali (Basket-makers) and the Chamar (Leather-worker) as lower in ritual rank than themselves. Like the other Satar, the Christian Satar also use the ritual criterion of *Sapha/non-Sapha* in ranking themselves with these other caste people.

The implicit consensus with the ritual values of the caste system has a profound effect on the Satar social system. It has created heterogeneous categories within their homogeneous group. The nature of these categories is complex especially because in Sunauli caste and class provide two models of behavior. Caste relates to ritual status while class relates to secular status. Although they are different models, they can function at the same time. In the context of Sunauli, they must be viewed as interrelated. Such interrelatedness of the ritual and economic statuses reflects the complexity of the Satar social system and makes it hard to describe it in a lineal sense. Such a situation also contributes to our understanding that not all behavior can be interpreted as being exclusively caste relevant in the caste societies.

This is evident from the way Satar rank themselves within their group in terms of both economic and political power.

The trend towards hierarchy which is evident among the Satar of Sunauli challenges the tradition of studying Satar as a uniform group. Among all the tribal groups of India, the Santal are the most widely studied so far (Troisi 1976). Most of these studies present them as a uniform cultural group (see Agrawal 1977; Biswas 1956; Kochar 1970; Mahapatra 1986; Majumdar 1956; Mukherjee 1960; Somers 1976; Orans 1965; Prasad 1972, 1974; and Troisi 1978). These studies examine the Satar interacting with other groups. While they explore the changing or unchanging traditions of the Santal, they typically treat any unchanged social unit as a uniform cultural group and any changed unit as one which is in the process of "dying out" or being "adsorbed". Although a few studies of the seventies raise the issue of Santal identity and give a brief description of their ritual categories, these are more concerned with cultural persistence than change (Kochar 1970 and Troisi 1978). The studies done on the Satar of Nepal also follow the above pattern of studying the Satar as sharing a set of cultural norms (Bista 1967/1976; Shrestha 1964-65, 1971). So far, only a few studies on the Satar have examined culture change and diversity among them. One such study is by Orans (1965) who explores the dynamics of culture change by demonstrating the impact of market economy and industrialization on the Santal social structure.

In my opinion, diversity in the form of social categories based on caste rituals will emerge in Nepal whenever an egalitarian group interacts with a dominant group that has the non-egalitarian caste ideology. Such interaction breaks the homogeneous egalitarian group into various heterogeneous sub-groups or categories which incorporate the characteristics of the caste ideology and, thereby, encourage the members of these categories to maintain social distance from each other.

The ritual categories of the Satar illustrates that such diversity is already in existence within their social group. This diversity has not been studied much because of the normative orientation of the native anthropologists. In order to observe and analyze this heterogeneity, we need to bring a shift in our approach towards understanding the various cultural systems - a shift that helps us focus on individuals and not just groups on the interests and strategies of individuals in the pursuit of certain goals and not just their cultural norms and values, and on the tensions and conflicts with the members of their larger group and the surrounding social groups regarding these interests and strategies. The native anthropologists of South Asia have yet to work in this direction - we have yet to come out of the grip of certain Western models. We have to stop viewing societies like those of

the Satar as passive, traditional, and unchanging. Only then we will be able to explore the dynamic potential of these societies, the positive nature of culture change, and heterogeneity within homogeneity.

Definition of being a Hindu

The third factor revealed by the ranking data is related to defining oneself as a Hindu. As mentioned earlier, the Bidin Hod and the Sapha Hod perceived themselves as Hindus. As Hindus, they share many things in common and, therefore, are closer to each other than each is to the Christian Satar. Further, as Hindus, they define their ritual status as higher than that of the Christian Satar and, therefore, maintain a great degree of social distance from them. The caste people, who identify themselves as Hindu, also recognize the heterogeneity existing within the Satar group. However, they are more aware of the religious categories of the Hindu versus the Christian Satar, than with the ritual categories of the Sapha Hod and the Bidin Hod. These caste people perceive all the non-Christian Satar (the Sapha Hod and the Bidin Hod) as Hindu Satar.

Although the Sapha Hod and the caste people define themselves and each other as Hindu, the label "Hindu" has different meanings for them. For the caste people, the criterion of being a Hindu is birth. In other words, to be a Hindu means to be born into a caste group and be a caste member. Although behavior is important to define oneself as a member of a particular caste group and as a Hindu, it is secondary. For the Satar, behavior is the primary criterion for being a Hindu. It is the behavior, a particular set of manners and rituals, which distinguishes them from the Muslims. any alteration in behavior brings a change in the Satar identity from a Hindu to a non-Hindu and is, therefore, highly disapproved of by the Satar. For the Satar then there is no correlation between being a Hindu and being a member of the caste society. One is possible without the other.

When looked at from outside these differences of opinion do not seem to have created much tension between the Sapha Hod, the Bidin Hod and the caste people. As Hindu, the members of both Satar and caste groups often overlook their cultural identities while interacting with each other or while participating in certain events, such as pilgrimages, village festivals, or meetings.

But when looked at from the inside, the status difference between the Satar and the caste people is quite obvious in the way they keep social distance from each other. While accepting the Satar as Hindu, the caste people also think of the Satar as belonging to a lower ritual status than the caste people. These caste people place all the Satar at the bottom of their ritual hierarchy and designate them as *Achoot*. From the caste people's point

of view, this helps them define their relationship with the Satar more positively as Hindu.

A caste view of society incorporates ethnic groups by giving them a proper place in the caste hierarchy according to the dietary practices and/or occupations of the members of these groups. It is the concept of such inclusiveness or incorporation which has led the caste people of Sunauli to view the Satar as belonging to their caste system, and to rank them as "untouchable" because of their particular dietary practices of eating field-mice, pork, and beef and their use of alcohol in all their rituals. My data indicate that from the Satar point of view the status which has been given to them may or may not have any significance. Thus, in spite of living together with the caste people, they do not view themselves as untouchable and retain their own cultural values and identity with a strong sense of pride.

It is for this reason that for a Satar to be a Hindu does not necessarily mean to follow the Hindu rituals as practiced by the caste people who are Hindu. A Satar, a Bidin Hod or a Sapha Hod, wants to identify himself as a Hindu mainly to distinguish himself from a Muslim or a Christian. Such identity enables him to maintain a greater degree of social distance from the members of these two religious groups. It also helps him to create and maintain closer ties with the caste people whose dominance saturates the economic, political, and social domains in the region. The strategic use of the Hindu identity, thus, allows a Satar to maintain a close interaction with the caste people. At the same time, such an identity enables him to distinguish himself from a caste member and assert his own ethnic identity. Because of this strategic use of the Hindu identity, a Satar does not see any correlation between being a Hindu and being a member of the caste society.

Conclusion

To sum up, the social milieu of the Satar is not isolated. They participate in the world around them. The implications of such participation are many. This paper has examined three such implications which were uncovered by conducting a ranking task. The first two implications are related to the concept of caste, its forms of ranking, and the pervasiveness of caste values among the Satar. These illustrate the dominant and inclusive nature of the caste system and its profound effect on the Satar social structure. This is evident from the Satars participation in the caste rituals and the existing heterogeneous categories within their homogeneous group. The third factor revealed by the ranking task indicates the social distance between the caste people and the Satar. It illustrates that although both the Satar and the caste people perceive themselves as Hindu, they have different meanings associated with this label. For the caste people, to be a Hindu means to be

born into a caste group. for the Satar, to be a Hindu means to behave like a Hindu (or a non-Muslim), and not necessarily to be a caste member. Such strategic use of the term "Hindu" allows the Satar to be a part of the wider Hindu society without entirely compromising their ethnic status.

Notes

- 1 Mandelbaum (1970) also points this out in his study of change and continuity in the caste society of India.
- 2 During 1978 and 1985, there were no *Matwali* in or around Sunauli.
- 3 Haimendorf (1966) and Levine (1987) also present such hierarchical categories in their studies of the Chhetri caste group and other ethnic groups of Nepal. See Hamilton 1819; Gray 1983; and Jones and Jones 1976 on untouchables of Nepal.
- 4 Satar use different terms of reference for the cast people of Nepal and India. Their *Mundo* category includes all the Nepali speaking caste people and all the ethnic groups of Nepal whose members may or may not speak Nepali as their mother tongue, such as the Sherpa, Tharu, Limbu, Rai, Tamang, Newar, Dhimal, and Magar. *Diku* literally means outlaw. It was used by the Santal of India for the Indian caste people especially when the caste people exploited the Santal as servants and wage laborers, and forced them into free (slave) labor. Today, the Satar of Sunauli use this label for the Indians and the Indian language speaking people of Nepal such as the Bengali, Marwadi, and Maithil people.

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PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT IN NEPAL: POLICIES FOR THE FUTURE

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Introduction

In a labour surplus four-sector economy composed of household, business, government and the rest of the world, income, output, and/or employment is determined by the decision to save and invest. Investment is mainly financed by two major sources, say, internal and external, and is determined by benefit (B) and cost (C) considerations. Greater the B/C ratio higher the rate of profit earned. So long as B exceeds C the net present value is positive, and the marginal efficient of investment exceeds the rate of interest. Savings, instead, are the positive function of both of the income and the rate of interest. Attraction for saving also increase with the stability of prices.

As income grows, a greater gap between income and consumption is expected. But since the scattered savings (made mainly by the household sector) must be collected and brought into the mainstream of the financial flows, the role of both organised as well as unorganized financial (money plus capital) markets becomes significant. Meanwhile, the business sector, including the corporate and incorporate, interacts with sources of fund of internal and external origins, and also uses its own account saving, i.e., the undistributed profit, for investment. The main factors inducing investment are: rate of interest (cost of borrowing or the reward for saving), availability of credit, prospective future return from investment, technological improvement, market accessibility, laws regulating taxes, profits and imposing restrictions on private interest, and insurance against future uncertainty.

As investable fund is limited in amount, and therefore requires the effective use in various income yielding assets - both financial and real- e.g., bond, machinery, bank deposit, equity, etc. The basic problem for the investor, therefore, is how to make investment secure and to reap maximum

benefit out of minimum involvement of fund in holding different assets. A wise investor is the one who does not put all the eggs in one basket. The role of a state is to provide an appropriate climate for this investment game.

In an underdeveloped economy like that of Nepal, since the domestic source of financing is constrained by an ability to save, investment requirements are fulfilled by an inflow of international fund both private and official. Private international decision to invest is influenced by monetary, credit, fiscal and other policies such as those on profit repatriation, labour use and permissive level and rate of exploitation of available financial and physical resources. Market prospects across the borders is of paramount interest.

The Nepalese Experience

Both the private and public sectors in Nepal are playing important roles in the process of production, consumption, exchange and distribution. Though the size of the private sector in terms of its contribution to GDP is very large (approximately 80 percent) in recent years there has been only a small difference between the size of public and private investment outlays. The public sector, however, is growing over time (Table 1).

**TABLE 1: GROSS INVESTMENT AT 1984/85 (2041/42)
PRICE INDEX WITH BASE YEAR 1984/85 = 100**

	1985/86	1986/87	1987/88
1. Private Sector	85.09	83.16	90.13
Agriculture	100.00	86.63	96.15
Industry	152.78	137.15	148.61
Electricity, gas and water	15.62	15.10	9.62
Construction	104.92	109.72	128.79
Trade, Hotel and Resta.	117.93	121.94	126.63
Transport, Storage and Communication	111.42	68.86	122.84
Fin., Insu., and Real Est.	110.13	119.05	126.96
Commun. Dev. and Social Ser.	114.29	109.52	104.76
2. Other Services (NGOS)	94.55	23.64	23.64
3. Total Private (1 + 2)	85.18	82.60	89.49
4. Government	98.95	101.79	113.92
5. Grand Total	90.51	90.02	98.93

	Share of Government (in percentage)	Share of Private (in percentage)
1984/85	33.66	61.34
1985/86	42.27	57.73
1986/87	43.72	56.28
1987/88	44.52	55.48

Source: CBS 1989

Note: GDP deflator has been used to express figures in real terms.

**TABLE 2: DIRECT FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN NEPAL
(PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF INVESTMENT UNDER
JOINT VENTURE)***

	Amount (Rs. in Million)	Percentage
Total Investment	1058.736	100.00
1. Industry	797.248	75.30
2. Service	261.488	24.70
Painting (Business Service)	10.701	1.01
Tourism and Hotel	173.716	16.41
Distribution	23.726	2.24
Renting (Apartment)	5.000	0.47
Communication	12.500	0.18
Personal Service	14.973	1.42
Water Turbine	9.300	0.88
Repair	5.757	0.54
Cold Storage	2.317	0.22
Consultancy	3.498	0.33

* Includes ventures currently operational as well as those under construction.

Source: Ministry of Industry (Official File); Date of Issue: September 1988.

Within the private sector fixed investment outlays, while construction, trade, hotel and restaurant, transportation, storage and communication, community development and social service and other service have been recording forward growth trend in the first three years of the Seventh Plan, industry and agriculture have been displaying a backward trend. In view of the large contribution of agriculture and industry to the GDP, to export advantage and to the absorption of the active labour force, the trend of private investment in these two major sectors of the economy is disappointing.

In the meanwhile, direct foreign investment too is not attracted adequately (Table 2). Its share in total national investment in 1987/88 is around nine percent.

Thus, Nepal is very slow in influencing the investment decision of the private sector, particularly in agriculture and industry. In the Seventh Plan it was assumed that private investment would be encouraged via changes through appropriate policies of taxation, licensing, import quota, tariff, wages, subsidies, interest rate, etc. and of public investment outlays in hard and soft infrastructure. The plan also aimed at the supply of other ancillary services like training, banking, communication, insurance, storage, packing, marketing and management. Modern technology was expected to be imposed in the system through the provision of public management of agricultural input and fuel and through budgetary and legal arrangements for the availability of qualified manpower, capital, raw materials and other goods at cheaper prices. The government was also active in exploring external markets for domestic goods and services. The results, however, were disappointing. The next plan must learn many lessons from this failure and the government must take policy conducive to accelerated growth.

Measures To attract Private investment: The basis of future policy choices

The measures to be taken for an accelerated growth of private sector may be classified into: (a) measures affecting only domestic investment; (b) measures affecting only foreign investment; and (c) measures affecting both (a) and (b).

General measures affecting both domestic and foreign investments include policies and programmes which lead to a cheaper supply of: trained manpower, electricity, raw materials and services like banking, insurance, road, storage, communication, packing and forwarding and consultancy. These supplies create external economies in favour of firms, industry and business undertaking and increase the flow of goods and services, a basic requirement of high business turnover. In the meanwhile, climate must be provided for the maintenance of stability in price exchange rate, and tax rate that help reduce uncertainty (as instability in these encourages hoarding, black marketing and control) and for the smooth operation of the capital market providing lubrication to the growth of private industry, commerce, agriculture and other business and linking domestic financial market with the world capital market.

On the other hand, specific measures (in addition to the above) that enhance private domestic investment must provide for adequate arrangement of supply of manpower, marketing mechanisms, raw materials, fuel,

machinery and equipment, future security against unfair competition and emergence of monopoly groups as was, lead toward a restriction of capital outflow above a certain limit. Finally, private foreign investment must be encouraged with the specification of: area of operation tax incentives, licencing procedures, rules of profit repatriation, laws regarding nationalization, and protection of property and patent right.

One of the benefits of foreign capital is that it is more likely, than domestic capital, to open up the external markets. Given Nepal's landlockedness, opening up of external markets will partly depend on solutions of problems of transit. Foreign investment is also conducive to transfer of technology. The limits of foreign capital investment relate to the ruthless exploitation of available domestic resources and, possible, a decay of small enterprises. For overcoming these problems, areas of foreign capital involvement must be identified and antimonopoly act and must be made effective. Conditions related to factory or workshop regulations must be spelled out and legal arrangements for settling disputes must be provided for.

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'TRIBES' IN THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF NEPAL SOME COMMENTS ON A DEBATE

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Introduction: 'Tribes' in India

The recent interest in the question of tribe-caste differences in Nepal stems very much from earlier debates among Indianists, and I want to begin this discussion by identifying certain focal issues raised in these exchanges. Administrators and anthropologists of India-these roles sometimes combined in the same persons - were for many years concerned with the differences between tribal and peasant/caste systems.² In the heydays of the British raj the differences were often expressed in racial or physiological terms, aided from the middle of the nineteenth century by the new technologies of photography and anthropometry (Pinney 1990). In time, distinctions came to be phrased in terms of a set of descriptive social or cultural traits associated with each. Tribal peoples were defined as ecologically more isolated, economically more primitive, socially less complex, and morally more backward than peasant/caste populations. Tribals might also be distinguished on the grounds of technology and livelihood: they were defined in terms of hunting and gathering and/or shifting cultivation, against the settled agriculture practised by caste/peasants (see Sinha 1973:100)

Sinha has raised the question of the relation between tribe and civilizational centres or more generally the state. Drawing on Redfield, he argues that movement from the isolated, homogeneous and unstratified tribal pole to the caste and peasant pole "involves a progression toward ethnic heterogeneity in social interaction, role specialisation, social stratification and emergence of elite classes and enlargement and diversification of territorial networks with civilisational centres" (Sinha 1973:103). But as Beteille has pointed out, "tribes with some of the simplest technologies have been more integrated with the wider society than others with a more advanced

technology' (1986:302). Morris (1982) for example, has shown how the Hill Pandaram of Kerala have for many generations had close links with peasant villagers on the edge of the forests in which they hunt and gather.

Criticisms of these various attempts to identify fundamentally opposed categories of tribe and caste came from different directions. For one thing, administrators and anthropologists who sought to make such clear distinctions were charged with creating a social category called 'tribe' for which there was no indigenous concept in most native language (Singh 1985:7). In ancient and medieval texts, as in colonial or contemporary rural India, all groups, 'tribes' and 'castes' alike were and are referred to as *jati* (Sinha 1980:1-2). Beteille, however, is sceptical of the suggestion that tribes were entirely the creation of the administrative or anthropological imagination, insisting that 'tribe and civilization have encountered each other for centuries' (1986:306). Certainly, the epic literature seems to suggest a category of remote, autochthonous, wild and warlike people (labelled 'tribes' by K.C.Misra), who lists 363 such groups mentioned in the Mahabharata (Misra 1987).

Criticism of a different kind has come from those who have sought to characterise the nature of tribal-peasant interaction, and found earlier models of differentiation less than useful. In the Indian context, Singh notes that from 'ancient times' peasant castes have been emigrating to tribal areas, a process accelerated during the colonial period. This led to the emergence of mixed tribal-caste/peasant villages, to the adoption of the new technologies, cropping systems, and linguistic and cultural norms brought by the migrants, and ultimately to the penetration of tribal economies by market forces (1985:12-13). Bose's well-known essay on 'The Hindu method of tribal absorption' (1941) was meant to demonstrate how 'primitive' tribal technology was inevitably compelled to give way to more 'advanced' plough technology brought by Hindu peasants.

But the realities of interaction and interdependence between tribes and peasants over the centuries rendered their assignment to separate structural or cultural realms increasingly impractical and unconvincing. As Beteille notes, "observers down the ages have ... persistently mistaken castes for tribes, and tribes for castes" (1986:311). He stresses the "permeability of the boundary between tribe and non-tribe" (Ibid.:316-17), although he argues that recent Constitutional attempts to safeguard the interests of weaker tribal communities have given tribal identity "a kind of definitiveness it lacked in the past" (Ibid.:318).

Finally, before turning to the Nepalese context, I want to note Bailey's to argue that caste and tribal society are not in every respect different from each other, but must be seen ideally as occupying opposite ends of a

single continuum. At one pole, the model caste society is characterised as 'organic', in the sense that each part is distinct but related to every other part in a hierarchical system. At the other pole, the model tribal society is 'segmentary', composed of equivalent and equal units (Bailey 1961: 11-14). To ascertain where along the continuum a particular group falls, Bailey introduces the criterion of access to land. Among caste people, he suggests, a right to land is achieved by a subordinate relationship to members of the dominant caste, whereas among tribal people access to land is acquired by equality as a kinsman. Hence, the larger the proportion of a given society which has direct access to the land, the closer is that society to the tribal end of the continuum, while the larger the proportion whose right to land is earned by a dependent relationship, the nearer is that society to the caste pole (Ibid.: 14-15).

Bailey's model is attractive for its refusal to attribute essential descriptive characteristics to caste and tribe, but its application can lead to some awkward outcomes. Thus Sinha observes that most 'dominant castes' who themselves control the land and so are not therefore in dependent relationships, would have to be characterised as approaching the tribal pole (Sinha 1965: 60). Bailey's attempt to identify land as a crucial element in tribe-caste distinctions is interesting, however, and I will return to this theme below.

Tribe and Peasant in Nepal

Anthropologists of Nepal have only recently expressed interest in this debate. This may be due in large part to the fact that Kathmandu, throughout the period of British rule in India, and however much it was influenced by the government there, retained its own bureaucracy and administrative system. For it must be recalled that it was British administrators in India who were the first to denote and label a category of 'tribal' communities for census purposes, comparing them to other populations organised on 'caste' lines. These distinctions were later adopted by the independent government of India, as by the anthropological establishment in the colonial and post-colonial periods (Padel 1988).

But if Nepal did not enjoy the 'benefits' to British administration, the notion of 'tribe' nonetheless became explicit in British discourses on Nepal. Kirkpatrick, in his *Account of the Kingdom of Nepaul*, published in 1811, referred to the eastern districts of the country as being inhabited by 'tribes' such as the 'Limboos', but he did not indicate what he meant by the term (1811:184). Several years later, Francis Buchanan Hamilton did suggest that tribal populations were characterised by egalitarian relations, and by specific

linguistic and customary practices, quite distinct from caste-stratified groups of Hindus (see Sharma 1978:3).

But the most prolific use of the term 'tribe' surfaced some two decades later in the debate about the recruitment of 'Gurkhas' into the Indian army.³ Brian Hodgson, who was for a time assistant to the British Resident and later himself the Resident in Kathmandu during the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century, was probably the first to label particular ethnic groups within Nepal as 'martial tribes'. The notion that some people will make good soldiers is not an idea original to the British in India, but in the course of the nineteenth century they 'formulated and codified the principle..... into a dogma' (Mason 1974:349). In an article entitled 'Origin and Classification of the Military Tribes of Nepal', published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society* in April 1833, Hodgson identified several 'military tribes' or 'military classes' (1833:219-20). Which he urged the East India Company to recruit into its army on the grounds that they are by far the best soldiers in India (with) unadulterated military habits' (Ibid.:221). At the time he wrote - hardly 15 years following the end of the Anglo-Nepal war of 1814-16- Hodgson suspected that the Nepalis might turn against the British again, and it seemed to him wise to employ Gurkhas in the Indian army. In the view of one historian of that period, "the more these turbulent martial people were drained away from Nepal, the brighter would become the prospect of Nepal being a weak and peaceful neighbour of British India" (Mojumdar 1973:160).

Hodgson was not the only one to write about the special military qualities which distinguished the 'tribes' of Nepal. Campbell, the Assistant Surgeon at the British Residency in Kathmandu during much of Hodgson's tenure also detected a natural propensity for the masculine activity of warfare and the "abhorrence of all the military tribes in Nepal to engaging in other pursuits than that of arms..." (see Hasrat 1970:226).

This idea of Gurkhas as a set of martial tribes developed fully towards the end of the nineteenth century. At first the Gurkha regiments were not too discriminating in their recruitment policies. However, by the end of the century regiments were permitted to recruit only men from the classes prescribed by army headquarters (Mason 1974:140). Nepal was divided up into tribal units and particular characteristics would be attributed to a whole people on the strength of often very casual personal observations.⁴ A few British officers became avid ethnographers, producing handbooks in which tribal differences were exaggerated and systematised (see, for example, Vansittart 1915; Morris 1933). This is what Cynthia Enloe presumably means by her comment that "building militaries has been, in part, an ethnographic enterprise" (1980:28).

The great majority of Nepalis were classified as members of brahmanical (by which was meant all high or twice-born) castes, or untouchables, and so reckoned unsuitable to serve in Gurkha regiments. So for British administrators and army officers concerned with Nepal, 'tribes' became synonymous with those segments of the population which were 'martial' and thereby recruitable. This portrayal of Nepalese tribes as martially inclined is still a dominant feature of contemporary British military writings on the Gurkhas (see Leonard 1965:48).²

If the concept of martiality remained the province of military authorities and writers, the notion of 'tribe' gained a wider currency among western scholars, not least among anthropologists. They have applied the term to a considerable diversity of groups- diverse in terms of size, habitat and economy: to semi-nomadic Chepangs and Kusundas, wealthy trading communities of Thakalis, high altitude farming and mountaineering Sherpas, as well as mid-montane-dwelling Gurungs, Tamangs, magars, Rais and Limbus who grow cereal crops and herd animals, and even the Newar inhabitants of the culturally and agriculturally rich Kathmandu Valley (see Dahal 1979:217). But despite its wide currency, there has been little attempt by anthropologists of Nepal to theorise the term, although Gellner has recently sought to apply models of tribe and caste derived from Indian debates to an examination of the Newar case. In response to the argument that the Newars constitute a tribal community, he argues that would imply:

little internal stratification; few full-time specialists, thus no division of labour; dependence (now or in the past) on swidden agriculture or pastoralism; a tendency in the past to lie outside the boundaries of state control; its own religious specialists so that Brahmans or other priests of the Great Traditions of South Asia are not regularly made use of. (Gellner 1986:115)

In terms of such a paradigm, he rejects the tribal label on the grounds that:

Newars have a highly developed internal hierarchy (far more complex than the Parbatiyas), and numerous specialists; they depend on sophisticated rice and pulse agriculture, have supported a monarchical state for 1600 years and have a culture pervaded by the Sanskritic notions and priestly services of two ancient Great Traditions. Hinduism and Buddhism (Ibid.:115).

In a recent paper, Gellner adds to the other criteria for distinguishing tribal from caste systems the "treatment of women", and concludes that Newar society requires its own model for analysis which is distinct from both the tribal and brahmanic (caste) ones (1991:119-21).

Some Nepalese scholars have attacked the (mainly anthropological) tendency to utilise the notion of tribe in the analysis of Himalayan society. They regard it as an unwarranted and inappropriate application of an imprecise and heavily-loaded western category to this particular south Asian context. It is construed as an attempt at 'special pleading' by foreign scholars for the preservation of tribal heritage or the protection of tribal populations from "alien (Hindu) influences" (Dahal 1979:221). This latter implication is regarded as part of a tendency to see tribal peoples as somehow 'non-Hindu', and interpreted as a failure by western researchers to appreciate that tribal religions are considered to be part of the wide Hindu cosmology (see Sharma 1978:4-5). Nepalese scholars also object to the use of these terms on the grounds that in process of highlighting structural or cultural oppositions between tribal and caste/Hindu systems, political conflicts are underlined, thereby threatening to negate official concern to promote national integration (Sharma 1978:3; Dahal 1979:221).

Western researchers should take these criticisms seriously, for they point to a widespread predilection, among anthropologists especially, for 'remote places' (Ardener 1987) and exotic peoples (Keessing 19). Ethnographic studies of Nepal have for many years avoided towns, focusing rather on 'isolated' settlements in distant parts of the hills. And within these localities they often appear to seek out pristine tribal cultures even where the tribal people they study live amongst and interact intensively with non-tribal peasants. This kind of romanticism, if well-meaning, is clearly no longer acceptable, and there are increasing expressions of dissatisfaction among western scholars themselves with the status of the tribe-caste/Hindu/peasant dichotomy (see Allen 1987:33; Gellner 1991:107) settings.

If greater sensitivity is called for in the application of dualistic models of tribe and caste/peasant, we have at the same time to remember that Nepal's own official discourse has always acknowledged ethnic diversity. The early Gorkha kings recognised the unique character and customs of the people inhabiting a particular country (*des*), and in the case of many indigenous hill communities⁶ ('tribes'?) their special relationship to the land was acknowledged by a royal grant of *kipat* rights (Burghart 1984:109). By the mid-19th century what had previously been an ethnic concept of country was transformed into a notion of species (*Jat*), and with the promulgation of the 1854 Legal Code (*Muluki Ain*) the various groups inhabiting the territories of the Gorkha king were brought together in a single ritual hierarchy (Ibid.:

116-17). The Code grouped together most indigenous and semi-autonomous communities of hill-dwellers, speaking Tibeto-Burman languages, labelled them 'drinking' (*matwali*) *jat*, and placed them below the 'twice-born' or 'sacred-thread wearing' (*tagadhari*) *jat* in the official ritual hierarchy. Indeed, Sharma points to the Hindu Nepalese model of their own society

in which different participating social units are given a caste name and definite within a hierarchy, no matter how divergent such groups may look or be in their beliefs and practices (1978:3).

The Concept of Tribe and the Concept of Land

In the remainder of this paper I want to suggest, notwithstanding their gradual integration into a single ritual and social hierarchy, that it may be useful to distinguish (analytically but *not* descriptively) certain ethnic groups within the population of Nepal in terms of their traditional relationships to land, and how attitudes to this land shaped people's identities. If such groups are labelled 'tribes', this is done without prejudice and certainly with no pejorative intent (see Gellner 1991:106). By doing so we are also able to draw comparisons with groups either similarly labelled (as tribes) or differently marked (as peasants)⁷ in other parts of south Asia, and hopefully move beyond the kinds of essentialism which has dogged so much of the debate. It may also enable us better to understand the nature of the transition from 'tribe' to 'peasant' which has characterised the history of many of Nepal's ethnic groups since the rise and unification of the Gorkha state. I will examine the case of the Limbus of east Nepal, whom I first studied in 1964-5, at a time when their traditional form of *kipat* land tenure still prevailed, although in a somewhat attenuated form (Caplan 1970). I should note that when I returned to east Nepal in 1988 a major programme of land reform had been introduced, the chief outcome of which for the Limbus was the abolition of their *kipat* tenure and the conversion of their lands into private property (*raikar*).

The Limbus have been settled in what is now far eastern Nepal (*Pallo Kirat*) for many hundreds of years. Little is known of their way of life prior to the incorporation of Limbuan (Limbu country) into the Gorkha state during the last quarter of the 18th century, although there is evidence of a political system based on shifting alliances among powerful household heads (Sagant 1985). Land, which until the end of the 19th century was plentiful, was deemed to belong to the group of agnatic kinsmen who cleared the forest and brought it under cultivation. It is likely that until the 18th century the Limbus, like many 'indigenous' groups of hill dwellers, practised a form of

slash and burn, or shifting cultivation. but even with the adoption of plough agriculture, probably as a result of contact with non-Limbu migrants entering their territories, the Limbus retained this clan-based system of land holding (frequently referred to, inappropriately, as communal tenure). The individual had rights to land by virtue of membership in kin groups of ascending order-sub-lineage, lineage, clan, etc.

Since the principal resource was labour, powerful households sought to attract followers and labourers by marriage and other forms of political alliance, so that the principle of agnation was lightly marked as far as access to land was concerned. In other words, rights to cultivate within the group's territory were granted to Limbu kin and political followers who were not necessarily agnates. But such grants were made in the context of a 'clan-based economy' (Gregory 1982) characterised land tenure to which the Gorkha ruler attached the label '*kipat*' in the wake of the conquest and unification (see Burghart 1984:109).

But while the state granted the Limbus a Royal Order (*lalmohar*) to hold their lands under *kipat* tenure, during the next two centuries it lost no opportunity to reduce the area under this form of tenure by series of hostile legislative measures. These were designed principally to satisfy the growing demands for land to cultivate by the large numbers of non-Limbu immigrants who had entered Limbuan in the wake of the conquest. Limbus were urged to settle these immigrants on their lands, and since Limbu land holdings were extensive and there was a need for settlers to provide labour, the Limbus conferred land grants on the newcomers, who recognised their dependence on the Limbus by both tributary and ritual offerings.⁸ Until the last decade of the 19th century these lands continued to be regarded as belonging to the Limbu donors under *kipat* tenure. The gift of land was not seen as an act of alienation, since there could be no such concept in a clan-based economy without private property. At this time the state introduced legislation which in effect allowed non-Limbu settlers and their descendants to convert into *raikar* tenure- in effect, private property and thus available to anyone- all lands which had been or would in future be granted to non-Limbus by their Limbu hosts. In these and other ways *kipat* lands were reduced and *raikar* lands increased.

By the beginning of this century the rate of *kipat* loss had reached alarming proportions, and under intense pressure from the Limbus the state executed a partial reversal of policy, banning the permanent alienation of *kipat* lands to members of other groups.⁹ By this time, in Ilam where I did fieldwork, only about 40 per cent of irrigated lands (*khet*) remained under *kipat*. These developments must be seen in the wider context of the state's concern to abolish *kipat* throughout the country, and standardise tenurial

arrangements. McDougal reports that in Rai country *kipat* had been totally abolished by the 1940s. He suggests that the state was able to exert its will over the Rais more decisively than over the Limbus because the former lived closer to the capital and "presented less of a united front" (1979:15). Regmi argues that Kathmandu had less difficulty establishing control over the *kipat* lands of other ethnic groups not only because these groups were "less organized and turbulent" than the Limbus, but because they were situated in "less strategic" areas (1971:53).

Land and Identity

When I first encountered the Limbus in 1964-5 *kipat* was inalienable not simply or even primarily in the sense that the state had introduced legislation banning its sale outside the community. For the Limbus it was inalienable because it has come to them from their ancestors the mythical 'Ten Limbus' (Caplan 1970:192). One legend related by Chemjong (1958) tells how Limbus came to be where they are;

In the beginning a large group of Mongolians came to the source of the Arun river. They were anxious to find a place to live, so they made a bundle of clothes and threw it in the river, and determined to follow it until it came to rest, for that would be the place which god had chosen for them. After many days they found the bundle on the river bank in the hilly region south of Tibet. They named the land *hidangna* 'the land chosen by god', and made it *kipat*. This place is still Far Kirat (east Nepal).

When I first knew them *kipat* was not regarded by the Limbus simply as a productive capital asset; in other words it was not a commodity, a thing distinguished absolutely from the person who owns it, and so valued solely for the returns it can provide. It was rather a form of 'inalienable wealth', a possession which serves to 'define who one is in an historical sense' (Weiner 1985:210). It stood for their way of life, and thus symbolised the cultural vitality and continuity of the community.

In this respect Limbus shared a conception of land as held by countless indigenous or 'tribal' peoples around the world, for whom "membership in the community generates an attitude to the land which is antecedent to the working of it" (Hart 1982:46). When I first knew them, Limbus regularly asserted that their forebears had cleared forests, worshipped deities and made them witnesses to their right to have these lands for all time. The grant of a Royal Order (*lalmohar*) by the first Gorkha king was

seen as state confirmation of this legacy. *Kipat* was thus more than a system of land tenure; it was the basis of Limbu identity as a people (see Chemjong 1958, 1966; Melford 1966).

By contrast, *raikar* land—the principal form of tenure through which Nepalese peasants have held land since the latter part of the 19th century—had and still has a very different meaning for its owners. This is not to say that those who possess *raikar* do not feel strongly, even passionately, about their property. Anyone who has spent time in a rural community in Nepal will attest to the innumerable disputes over land, many of them ending in court. Stiller points out how that land in both pre-and post-Gorkha Nepal was the “sole means for attaining to prestige and influence in the state” (1973:19).

For a time following the conquest the state strictly controlled the sale and purchase of *raikar* land in many parts of the country, so that individual rights in such lands were limited to its cultivation and enjoyment of the harvest. But the government was gradually compelled to acquiesce in a variety of “extralegal” practices engaged in by peasants to secure greater autonomy in their lands, and towards the latter part of the 19th century *raikar* land had in effect become private property (see Regmi 1976:171-78).

For over a century, then, *raikar* had had the status of a commodity, which can be (and frequently is) bought and sold; it is an item of investment and, on occasion, speculation. It involves an agreement between the individual and the state, thus anyone can own *raikar*. In a manner quite distinct from the relationship implied by *kipat*, the person who owns *raikar* land is separated from the item owned and transacted, and does not participate in it. The one who owns such land acts upon it, but is not in turn acted upon by it. Indeed, it is awkward and misleading to speak of ‘owning’ *kipat* (as one ‘owns’ *raikar*) since ownership objectifies the thing owned. Limbus speak of being *kipatiya*s, which suggests association with, or being part of *kipat*. As Williams says in relation to the Yolngu of Australia, it is a case of ‘owning’ the land and ‘being owned’ by it (Williams 1983:106-7).¹⁰

In the 1960s, a comprehensive series of land reform measures was announced by the state, among them the decision to abolish *kipat* land and convert all such lands to *raikar*. This programme was introduced during the 1970s and by the time I returned to the field work area in 1988, not only had *kipat* land been converted to *raikar* tenure, but this had resulted in a large proportion of Limbus households selling most or all of their lands. With the abolition of *kipat* the Limbus lost, to quote Weiner again, their “claim to the past” and to do so is “to lose part of who one is in the present” (1985:210). The consequences of this change of tenure were therefore profound in terms of Limbu identity. I was told that after the abolition of *kipat* the “Limbus

has no name. We became beggars- with no place, no land. How can there be Limbus without *kipat*?"

To the Limbus, therefore, the loss of *kipat* represents not simply a material loss, for *kipat* transcended its own materiality. With its abolition the Limbus were denied a part of their past and so, inevitably, of their sense of continuity in the present. *Kipat* provided a means of belonging, to a place and a distinctive community- the one not separable from the other. In short, it defined them as a "tribe". Conversion of the land to *raikar* has served that connection, and rendered the land what it had never been before- a commodity. By legislating for the alienation of what had previously been inalienable, the state effectively inaugurated the last phase in the transformation of a tribal into a peasant community.

Conclusion

Since the unification of Nepal in the late 18th century (and possibly for some time prior to that) peoples belonging to different communities and traditions have lived alongside each other in multi-ethnic hill settlements. This was occasioned by migrations on the part of members of various castes from the plains and valleys to the south into the mid-montane homelands of 'indigenous' groups such as the Limbus of Far Kirat. This often resulted in the gifting of inalienable land to the newcomers, the adoption of more advanced agricultural technologies by the previously settled groups, and - alongside the growth of a common Nepali language and the spread of a dominant Hindu Great Tradition- the establishment of economic, social and cultural interdependencies among the various communities. Over time, adoption of similar modes of livelihood and the intense interactions among persons of different backgrounds created obvious similarities of life-style and blurred the distinctions between the longer-settled and incoming communities. Thus in terms of the ascriptive characteristics generally employed by those involved in this debate (see above), the student of Nepalese hill society would, certainly by the end of the 19th century, have found it virtually impossible to distinguish "tribe" from 'peasant'. Save, perhaps, in one respect: the way in which land was held and conceptualised. In tribal society, land was the "ultimate inalienable gift" (Gregory 1982:165). Indeed, I have suggested that such a way of relating to land defined the group as 'tribal'.

If the Limbus were at all representative of Nepal's tribal communities (and there are reasons to assume that the Tibeto-Burman speaking groups inhabiting these Himalayan regions did share similar attitudes to their lands) *kipat* was much more than a simple category of land tenure in an array of official tenurial designations (see Regmi 1963-8). It would have constituted

the group's very identity, the sense it had of itself, inasmuch as the land in which it participated and by means of which it defined itself symbolised its continuity and immortality.

The non-tribal peasants related to land in a different way. As they came to hold property in their own right (when the state transformed their *kipat* grants into *raikar* tenure, and as *raikar* itself became a form of private property) the land they owned became an alienable commodity. In contrast to tribal people, then, who acquired land as individuals only in the context of a complex hierarchy of collective right, non-tribal immigrants and their descendants enjoyed land primarily as the private property of individuals. And as the state gradually diminished and ultimately abolished the tenurial systems which shaped the very existence of tribal communities themselves, it encouraged the separation of people and land characteristic of a peasant mode of existence.¹¹

It could be argued that prior to the intervention of the state, the existence of non-Limbus in the territories of Tibet-Burman communities had not constituted a threat to the tribal system. Only with the gradual emergence of a contrasting category of people holding property under different and novel tenurial arrangements did indigenous communities like the Limbus become significant.

For a variety of geo-political reasons the Limbus of east Nepal retained their *Kipat* rights, and so their "tribal" character, until relatively recently. We have very little evidence for when or how other indigenous communities 'became' peasants. Indeed, it would be inappropriate to assume, on the one hand, that all such ethnic groups were at one time "tribal" (in the way I have employed the term) or, on the other, that where it did occur the process of peasantisation was everywhere the same. I would not suggest nor have I meant to imply an inevitable sequence of tribal-to-peasant evolutionary change. But the Limbus provide a fascinating case study of the historical transformation of a tribal into a peasant community, which might serve as a point of comparison for other indigenous populations in both Nepal and India.

Notes

1. An earlier version of this paper was given to the Himalayan forum held at the School of Oriental and African Studies during the 1990-91 academic session. I am grateful to the convenor, Dr. Michael Hutt, and participants in the seminar for their critical discussion. I must also thank Dr. Pat caplan for her helpful comments. My visit to east Nepal

after an absence of over 20 years was made possible by a grant from the Nuffield foundation, and I here express my appreciation.

2. Although I am mindful of the dangers of doing so, in this paper I employ the terms 'caste' and 'peasant' interchangeably. The essay is concerned with the tribe non-tribe dichotomy, rather than with the distinction between these other analytical categories.
3. The first 'Gurkhas' were recruited from among Nepalese prisoners and deserters during the Anglo Nepal war of 1814-16.
4. In Victorian Britain it was thought that such qualities were inheritable (Street 1975:7)
5. A recent book on the Gurkhas (Farwell 1984) has an appendix on 'The Gurkha Tribes' which repeats almost verbatim descriptions of ethnic groups first employed by Vansittart in his handbook of 1895/1915.
6. By 'indigenous' I merely imply early settlement in the areas these communities now inhabit. A number have myths of migration from other areas and of having replaced earlier settled populations (eg Limbus in Ilam district of east Nepal).
7. In the remainder of the paper I will employ only the term 'peasant' to convey the notion of 'Hindu', 'caste, and/or 'non-tribal'.
8. Gell notes that 'Hindus' who entered Muria Gond territories last century continued to acknowledge the Muria as the 'true owners of the land' and participated in the Muria ritual system because it was the Muria gods who ensured its fertility' (198:117)
9. The colonial Government of India frequently took steps to ban the alienation of tribal land to non-tribal people. Gell notes that Muria land was legally prevented from being sold to non-advasis (Gell 1986:124). According to Singh, this policy can be traced to the Wilkinson rules of 1833 (Singh 1985:12).
10. These notions of identity and separation stem from Marcel Mauss's discussion of the 'Gift' in pre-capitalist economies, and Marx's concepts of 'commodity' in capitalist economies, as these have recently been brought together by Gregory (1982).
11. In the Indian tribal context, too, Singh notes that 'the most striking feature (of the latter part of the 19th and the early part of the 20th century) was the breakdown of the communal mode of production and the emergence of private right in land' (1985:12).

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RESEARCH NOTE

DOES DIVINITY PROTECT THE KING? RITUAL AND POLITICS IN NEPAL

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Nepal is a country with a ritual tradition that is accumulative to such an extent that it indeed seems as if each and every trend that once entered the Valley of Kathmandu has been preserved and readily absorbed into the already existing body of observances without a commensurate loss. Added to this capacity of absorption a considerable indigenous creativity must be assumed for giving shape to a ritual calendar in which hardly a day can pass without particular observances. The degree of Newar originality is subject to discussion, with some scholars holding that almost every indigenous conception has at one or the other time found its origin in prevalent Indian currents of thought and expression.¹ Others, and not in the last place local scholars, have maintained that the bulk of tradition has acquired its distinctive features in Nepal itself, as a result of the rich imagination and refinement of the Valley's millennia-old civilisation. It is a question which to a large extent depends on reconstruction of a sometimes indefinite past and as such will not bother us here.

There is enough evidence of the early and on-going Sanskritization of Nepal here taken in its original sense as referring to the Valley of Kathmandu and its perimeters. Equally striking however is the distinctive shape the culture of its Newar inhabitants has assumed within the larger context of South Asian civilisation. Newar ritual, whether of Hindu or Buddhist persuasion, is often characterized as *Tantric*, a label that tends to obscure the just-mentioned cumulative nature of tradition and the many archaic elements contained by it. The absorptive capacity can for example be found in the fire-sacrifice to which I have drawn attention in the last KOTA conference.

But ritual in Nepal has not only been fostered with devotion, it has also been persistently subject to political manipulation. One of the most

recent and also one of the most obvious examples has been the panchayat system. This so-called partyless form of four-tiered government councils headed by the king has for the past thirty years been described as belonging to Nepal's most ancient tradition, thus being part and parcel of its cultural identity -- here, it should be noted, Nepal refers to the modern, territorially defined nation.

After this panchayat system was finally brought down by popular pressure last April, the government media almost overnight started to praise the multi-party democracy in virtually the same phrasing. Without even a change of tune the martyrs of the ancient regime (commemorating the overthrow of the Rana rule) were replaced by the martyrs of Yesterday's enemy, the movement for democracy. Most strikingly king Birendra of Nepal, himself closely identified with panchayat rule, succeeded in saving his throne in an almost elegant and for outsiders (and some insiders) hardly intelligible way. Two days after an unscheduled popular march on the palace left scores of people killed by army forces, and after a night of frantic last-minute talks between the king and opposition leaders, the Press Secretariat of the Palace gracefully announced: "His Majesty Initiates Political Reform in accordance with Popular Will" (heading *Rising Nepal* 9-4-90). In a short royal bulletin the thirty-years old ban on political parties had been lifted and the panchayat system thereby abolished. Opposition leaders suddenly appeared on government controlled television. Remarkable were the words of Congress leader Mr. Krishna Prasad Bhattarai (later to become prime minister), who had just been received in audience by His Majesty for the first time in his life: "His Majesty is a very gentle person. His liberal disposition and his love for his people is truly deep. That is why he accepted our request for a multi-party system in Nepal. His Majesty wants development for the happiness of the people" (quoted in *Rising Nepal* ib.). Had not the palace been virtually under siege and were not the people outside asking for the King's just acquitted prime minister, Marich Man Singh, to be hanged? What was it that gave the King this capacity of instantly rising above his disgraced allies, a capacity that would not leave him during the whole critical process of negotiations that was yet to follow?

During the height of the turmoil the Nepalese King's divine status, or rather his imminent loss of it, was broadly measured out in the World Press. The World's last God-Ruler, it was stated in headlines, the Embodiment of Lord Visnu, finally had to step down to earth and face democracy. This blatant show of simplicity may live up to the expectations of the readership, but it cannot really hide the obvious questions implied by it: If the King is indeed considered a God, how can he be supposed to loose that identity all of a sudden? What is the precise nature of his identification with Lord Visnu? Is

it the kingship to which divinity is attached or the person of the King? Or is it all political forgery, a construct fabricated to serve the interests of the court and the ruling class?

When Prithvi Narayan Shah of Gorkha had finally conquered the whole of Nepal Valley in 1769, very soon a variant of *Graeca cepit Romam cepit* presented itself. Sure, the conquerors remained proud of the brave virtues of their life in the hills and their warrior status, but they could not avoid becoming a part of the culture they had conquered. And, at least partly, they have also consciously strived to achieve that state. As Burghart² has observed, an important way for the Gorkhali kings to expand their realm was to include the deities of other kingdoms in it by offering respects and gifts, thus enhancing the sanctity of their greater realm and their status as universal rulers. According to a widespread story circulating in Kathmandu, Prithvi Narayan Shah submitted to the ritual of the tutelary Goddess of the Malla kings already at the very moment of his conquest. At that time the yearly festival of Indra, the King of the Gods, happened to be celebrated there. A very important element of the festival is the blessing which the virgin incarnation of the tutelary goddess bestows upon the ruler. By applying a red *tika* (a mark of blessing) on the forehead of the king she ensures his reign for the year to come. Up to the present day a large crowd attends the function including the corps diplomatique and foreign guests who assemble on the balcony of the old royal palace to await the auspicious moment standing in the blazing heat.

The story goes that Prithvi Narayan had chosen this very day for his successful assault on Kathmandu. On his arrival at the palace square the royal Kumari -- the virgin incarnation of the Goddess --- was about to bestow her mark of bliss on the ruler of Kathmandu. Without hesitation she placed the *tika* on the forehead of the conqueror Prithvi Narayan, and with that, a new dynasty came into power.

Whatever its factual truth, the story of the royal Kumari blessing the new rulers leads us to one of the central questions concerning the royal rituals as performed to the present days. How can it be explained that the ever-changing political circumstances, especially of the last two centuries, are accompanied by the persistence of rituals of an utterly conservative nature? The most significant rituals which at present concern kingship, or with which the king is foremost concerned, at least date back to the reign of the Malla dynasty half a millennium ago and even to the times beyond that epoch. The royal rituals of Nepal not only survived the change of dynasty in the 18th century, but also the virtual seclusion of the kings in the country that the Rana prime ministers were the de facto hereditary rulers of Nepal -- a period which lasted until 1951. They lived through the restoration of the

monarchy in a modern, democratic context as well as through the subsequent period in which the Kings Mahendra and Birendra once again tried to concentrate power in the palace -- the period which just ended. And, finally, it looks as if both the king and the rituals of kingship will survive the latest turn-over and the establishment of a constitutional monarchy in Nepal. What can be inferred from this unchanging character of ritual with regard to its legitimizing function or its social significance in other respects? If the rituals of the state, however indirectly, would form a reflection of prevalent ideology, how is it to be explained that the rituals of kingship remain virtually unchanged even during the most drastic of political changes? Should we conclude that this very unchangeability of ritual suits its legitimizing function or exactly the opposite, that this state of affairs is demonstrating that the ritual does not pertain to social and political realities at all? Instead of forcing our way out, the problem may be further qualified and, if possible, made to bear on the question from which our inquiry started: how to conceive of the king's divinity?

Early anthropology has tended to make this question the subject of generalization. As such it had already given rise to endless mystification before it again became a fashionable subject in current anthropology. Divine or sacred kings, or most often the legacy they left behind, are once more discovered all over the world. Or rather, they form a focus of attraction for a western mind that turned extremely sensitive to matters of sacrality -- particularly those pertaining to the highest levels of power. But, turning to Nepal again, the divine dimension in kingship is certainly there, though perhaps not in conformity with our expectations. Briefly the divine aspect of kingship has very little to do with power politics and even less with ethical standards in conducting those. This point will be considered in more detail below. Just to clear the way and not to boil down the issue completely, it should also be noted that among the Nepalese people not the slightest confusion exists regarding the identity of the king and that of the God he is assumed to incarnate. A clear distinction is perceived between the worship due to the God and the respects due to the king. In that regard Gerald Toffin³ is completely right arguing against a concept of identification that would render the king equal to Lord Vishnu, the God. Yet it would also be wrong to put the relationship on an altogether metaphorical plane. Evidently there is something in between, a kind of excluded middle, in which the God is humanized and the king is deified, approaching each other without meeting in one and the same identity. Toffin tries to solve the issue by contextualizing it: like some dancers who incorporate divinity only after putting on their masks, the kings of Nepal in certain festivals and at certain highlights assume a divine identity. Toffin goes on stating that in this regard

Nepal is different from hinduized kingdoms in South East Asia where the king was really treated as a divinity. One wonders whether this contrast is indeed brought about by different native conceptions or by the sources primarily consulted in either case. The humanity of the Nepalese king is testified by present day observations, but if one were confined to epigraphical and literary sources those might easily lead us to conclude that the king is no less a divinity in Nepal than in South-East Asia. The very panegyric or straight-forward hagiographic character of extant sources makes one believe that the kings of Nepal have, all through its known history, been *cakravartins* or worldrulers in whom Lord Visnu had descended. Till the present day a taboo rests on the king to have a sight of the most ancient and hallowed statue of Vishnu. Facing it he could incur the risk of contamination and hence the dissolution of his person --- with all the consequences for the kingdom.

A similar identification with Lord Siva, who in his form of Pasupatinatha equally pervades epigraphical record, does however not occur. In all his public addresses the present king of Nepal still evokes the blessings of Lord Pasupatinatha on the country and the people. The royal *samskaras* or life cycle rituals of the kings are also performed at Pasupatinatha on the banks of the holy Bagmati river. In this case there is no danger of contamination and yet there exists, at least since the times of the Malla kings, a peculiar relationship between the king and his tutelary Goddess who in turn is intimately linked to Lord Siva. Stories which we cannot dwell upon here hint at the subdued erotic character of the relationship between the king and the Goddess Taleju. Like Lord Siva himself, the king derives his *sakti*, his power of action, from his proximity to the Goddess, an alliance which tends to render the human queen into a kind of anomaly, often charged with intrigue or magic. During the recent upsurge the story circulated that it was the queen who most vehemently resisted the popular wishes and tried to poison her husband for giving in to them.

The relationships which the king of Nepal further entertains with a host of other deities all point to the fact that he is able to communicate both on the divine and on the human level, partaking of both identities. It is moreover clear that the divine quality is not of an abstract nature in the sense of being attached to the institution of kingship rather than to the king himself-- as Lingat⁴ would have it. Indeed, an empty throne is worse than the most evil of kings, because it breaks up the sanctity of the realm, guaranteed only by the king's presence. Finally it is also not the king as a person, who is divine by the simple fact of his royal descent-- for a king dislodged loses his divinity. So we are left with the last remaining possibility, namely that it is the king occupying the throne and acting accordingly who embodies

divinity and extends his relationships into the realm of the divine. It is therefore of utmost importance for understanding kingship in Nepal to determine the nature and quality of the royal acts *par excellence*.

In his illuminating analysis of kingship in ancient Indian law, Lingat emphasizes the king's prerogative of danda, punishment. Danda (lit. "club") itself is again personified as a deity emanated from Brahma. In the execution of punishment the king does not inflict himself with impurity, just like the sacrificer does not incur impurity by slaying the victim. The performance of kingship is thus comparable with a protracted sacrifice. It should, however, be noted that the king and his danda do not stand alone in upholding the dharma or divine order. Brahmin and king together maintain that order, the first one by his wisdom and his giving advice, the second one by his justice and his employing violence. A similar configuration can indeed be found in Nepal, where the honorific of the king is *Sri Panc*, "five times lustre" and that of his *rājguru*, the brahmin, *Sri Cha* "six times lustre". The divinity of the brahmin, of course, has always been beyond question in Indian tradition. It is the divinity of the king which is puzzling with its apparent ambivalence and transience. By attributing divinity to the institution of kingship and its specific priestly function—the purification of the sinner by executing punishment — Lingat seems to have found a way out of the problem. His argument, however, adds up to the identification of the king with Danda and leaves open the question of the king's identifications with other gods, most notably Vishnu.

Instead of trying to solve the matter in his turn, Heesterman⁵ focuses attention on a series of contradictions inherent to the notion of kingship in ancient India. The king is of course supposed to uphold the dharma and be its embodiment himself. But in the Vedic prose texts already, he is also called the eater of his people, and in the celebrated dharmaśāstra of Manu he is compared to a butcher who keeps a hundred slaughterhouses. Evidently his divine quality does not employ his righteousness.

What then, exactly, does it imply? According to Heesterman there is a single certain which transcends the conflicting statements on other claims to divinity, namely that the king must be *abhisikta*, being consecrated by a brahmin. In fact, Heesterman argues, this means nothing else than that the king thereby becomes a *dikṣita*, a consecrated sacrificer, be it, of course, the most important one in his realm. It is here, in his capacity as the principal celebrant of sacrifice, that we can trace the ultimate divinity of the king. It is also exactly this quality which is exhibited by the Nepalese kings, past and present, and in which we thus find the clue to their divinity. It is a divinity which does not relate at all to the power of the king over his subjects or to the justice or injustice of his rule. But it is certainly conditional on his

being in power, for only as master of his realm can he be the principal celebrant of sacrifice, a sacrifice which in last instance is being conceived of as his own. Very revealing in this respect is a passage in the Satapatha Brahmana which comes close to a parable of the situation in Nepal. Sacrifice, it must be understood, is a contest comparable to the struggle for power but on a different level, with other rewards. In the passage I am referring to (SBXIV,1,1) a number of Gods set out on a sacrificial session to achieve their wishes or to attain immortal glory-- for such are the rewards of sacrifice, they agree that whoever among them shall be first in encompassing the ultimate end of sacrifice through austerity, fervour etc. shall be the most excellent of them and they say, "shall then be in common to us all". The enigmatic phrasing is characteristic of sacrificial texts, as indeed the secret of sacrifice is not something to be given away in clear-cut language. Yet the passage immediately following reveals quite a bit of it and I therefore quote it in full⁶: "Visnu first attained it (i.e. the ultimate end of sacrifice) and he became the most excellent of the gods; whence people say, "Visnu is the most excellent of the gods". Now he who is this Visnu is the sacrifice; and he who is this sacrifice is yonder Aditya (the sun). But, indeed, Visnu was unable to control that (love of) glory of his; and so even now not every one can control that (love of) glory of his.

Taking his bow, together with three arrows, he stepped forth. He stood, resting his head in the end of the bow. Not daring to attack him, the gods sat themselves down all around him. Then the ants said..... "What would ye give to him who should gnaw the bowstring?" "We would give him the (constant) enjoyment of food, and he would find water even in the desert..... "So be it", they said.

Having gone nigh unto him, they gnawed his bowstring. When it was cut, the ends of the bow, springing asunder, cut off Visnu's head."

The more or less hidden message of the passage tells us the winner of the sacrificial session only comes to his full attainment by being slain himself. He is the head of the sacrifice and from his body flows the *prasad* (implicitly the drink of immortality) which the other gods absorb to attain their glory. Visnu became, as previewed in the enigmatic formula at the start of the contest, verily "in common to them all". The charming peculiarity of the story as given here is that the puny ants are effecting the sacrifice to take that course. While the identification of the sacrificer with the sacrifice already occurs in the Rgveda, the role of the ants in the text considered here, aptly turns the common message into a parable of the king and his unseen subjects. Enveloped in his pride the king thus meets his destiny, in spite of himself.

The king who embodies Visnu -- and kings like that are not confined to Nepal, does so by the grace of sacrifice. In practice he will replace the sacrifice of his own self with other sacrificial ingredients and gifts to the gods, but his divinity derives from being its very substance and enactment himself. The discrepancy between political change and ritual continuity finds its explanation in the contrasting values that underlie the ways of obtaining power and those of obtaining sacrificial merit. Yet, as there is no power greater than that engendered by sacrifice, those initially divergent ways of achievement are bound to meet each other in a single victory or catastrophe. In the strategies of competent king, a delicate balance between the stage of power and that of sacrifice is essential. For although the value attached to the latter is vastly superior, the king must avoid being left with nothing to sacrifice except himself -- that is, if he wants to stay in power.

Returning to the present Nepalese scene, the king appears to have surmounted the crisis after it seemed at first that he had fatally entangled himself with a power-eager clique. Moreover he reacted quite late to the inevitable collapse. On the eighteenth of February already when a government procession including the cabinet and the prime minister himself was welcomed with a shower of stones in the main streets of Kathmandu, the ways of power were visibly exhausted: it was a complete loss of face. In the following seven weeks total defeat for this Majesty's Government came closer step by step. Only when the ants had started gnawing his throne did the king react--but then he had a lot of things left with him to sacrifice, his prime minister to start with. The king truly assumed his sacrificial role, the role which he and his predecessors have since ancient times been engaged in. He professed *tyaga*, abandonment, of possessions and people, thus conforming to the principal characteristic of the sacrificer. He lived up to abandonment in such a measure that he did not need to take the ultimate step of self-abandonment. Much to the surprise of outside observers the combined opposition of congress and United Left Front instead invited the king to head a new Opposition Government on April 16th, only ten days after the brutal massacre of citizens in front of the palace. His Majesty prudently, and expectedly, declined the offer, but significant is that it was made at all. Instead of being dragged along by the political process that brought about the downfall of his pawns, the king was asked to play a pivotal role again. Appeals were issued to the king for restoring order with the very powers he was asked to sacrifice. If the king will keep to his pledge, this throne will almost certainly be saved.

To a modern mind it may appear that the Constitution now being drafted will finally replace the divinity of both brahmin and king by possessing its own sanctity. The Constitution will no doubt take care of

power distribution and human rights, but, as we have seen, the divinity of the king lies on the entirely different plane. Although the king has by popular pressure been forced to relinquish his accumulated powers, he is likely to remain the country's chief sacrificer, absorbing in his works the sins and virtues of his people and redistributing the sacrificial merits among them in the form of the country's prosperity. As the principal celebrant of sacrifices -- including those of punishment and war -- the king has always run the risk of becoming himself the victim. The very source of his divinity may, in contrast to that of the brahmin, turn against him and put his life at stake. Truly devout kings, in which ancient Nepalese history abounds, may even choose for abandonment instead of fulfilling kingship with all its concomittant ambivalence and violence. By choosing that path they in fact become like brahmins, no longer sacrificing for the country but for and with themselves alone. Although the Nepalese king can in certain occasions be seen to be dependent on his brahmin for performing his principal act of sacrifice, this dependency can by no means be generalized. It does not even pertain to the crucial sacrificial acts which the king performs for the goddess who, as his *Sakti*, empowers him to rule. Although the relationship with his subjects is intrinsically delicate and ambivalent, the king's own source of divinity is recognized by the people. A single sight of the king is widely believed to absolve people from the sins and defilements they may have incurred that very day. However, the king's divinity does no more protect him than it did Lord Visnu himself in the brahmana passage treated above. And least of all, it must be concluded, does it protect him from his own people.

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RESEARCH NOTE

नेपाल-भूटान धार्मिक र सांस्कृतिक सम्बन्ध बढाउनमा स्वयम्भू चैत्य तथा गुम्बाको भूमिका

डिल्लीराज शर्मा
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विषय प्रवेश:

राजनैतिक सम्बन्धभन्दा सांस्कृतिक सम्बन्ध अझ प्रगाढ र दरिलो हुन्छ। सांस्कृतिक सम्बन्धबाटै एक देशको अन्य मूलुकसँगको राजनैतिक सम्बन्धको निर्धारण गरिन्छ। त्यसैले सांस्कृतिक सम्बन्ध बढी घनिष्ठ एवं विश्वासिलो भएर रहेको हुन्छ। नेपालको आफ्ना छिमेकी मूलुकहरूसँगको सम्बन्धको प्रसंगमा सांस्कृतिक सम्बन्ध नै पहिलो पंक्तिमा आउँछ। यो सांस्कृतिक सम्बन्धको सुरूवात प्राचीनकाल देखि नै स्थापित भैसकेको थियो। सांस्कृतिक तथा धार्मिक सम्बन्धले नेपाल त्यसैबेला तिब्बत, चीन, भारत तथा भूटानसँग एउटै सूत्रमा बाँधिएको थियो। धार्मिक अनुष्ठान, पूजा-आजा, देवी-देवता प्रतिको समान विश्वासको आदान प्रदानबाट यस्तो सम्बन्धको स्थापना गरिएको थियो। यसै क्रममा नेपाल र भूटानको धार्मिक सम्पर्क बढाउनमा महत्त्वपूर्ण योगदान दिने काठमाडौंको प्रसिद्ध स्वयम्भू चैत्यको महत्त्वबारे यस लेखमा प्रकाश पार्न प्रयास गरिएको छ।

नेपाल-भूटान सम्बन्ध

नेपाल र भूटानको धार्मिक सम्बन्ध बारे उल्लेख गर्दा यसको मूलमा रहेको बौद्ध धर्मको प्रभावबारे पनि उल्लेख गर्नु आवश्यक छ। भूटानमा बौद्धधर्मको प्रवेश सातौँ आठौँ ई. शताब्दिताका भएको थियो। बौद्धधर्म नेपालबाट तिब्बत र तिब्बतबाट भूटानमा पुगेको थियो। नेपाल यसको मूलकेन्द्रको रूपभारहेको हुनाले नेपालका बौद्ध तीर्थस्थलहरूले ठूलो सम्मान र महत्त्व पाएका थिए। स्वयम्भू, बौधनाथ स्तूपका साथै यस वरिपरि रहेका बिहारहरू यस दृष्टिकोणले महत्त्वपूर्ण छन्। यी स्तूप तथा चैत्य र बिहार तथा घ्याङको मरम्मत संभार सम्बन्धी व्यवस्थाले बौद्धधर्म प्रतिको समान आस्थालाई यहाँ स्पष्ट पारेको देखिन्छ।

यसको साथै नेपाल र भूटान सम्बन्धको चर्चा गर्दा केही प्राचीन साहित्यीक स्रोतमा उल्लेखित कुरालाई पनि यहाँ समावेश गर्न सकिन्छ। जस्तो गोपाल वंशावलीकारले वलदेव पछिका राजा शंकरदेवको बारेमा लेख्दा 'भोटान्त पर्यन्तं निष्कटक राज्यं करोती' भन्ने

उल्लेख गरेको हुनाले यीनको राज्यविस्तार भूटानसम्म फैलिएको थियो भन्ने देखिन्छ। तर यसलाई पुष्टि गर्ने अरु प्रमाणहरूको आवश्यकता भने रहेकै छ।

भूटानमा स्यावदुङ नावाङ नामगेलले (सन् १६१६-१६५२) धर्मराजाको रूपमा शासन गर्न थाले, देखिनै भूटानको विदेशसँगको सम्बन्ध विस्तार हुँदै आयो। नावाङ नामगेलले अरु देशहरूसँगै नेपालसँग पनि सम्बन्ध सपना गरेको देखिन्छ। यिनी त्यसवेला गोरखा आएर राजा राम शाहसँग भेट गरेका थिए। यिनले काठमाडौँको मल्ल राजा तथा दक्षिण र पश्चिमका सेन राजाहरूसँग पनि सम्पर्क कायम गरेका थिए। आफ्नो पालामा मगर, गुरुङ, किँराती, नेवार तथा खसहरूलाई यिनले भूटान ल्याई त्यहाँको मैदानी भागमा वसोवास गराएका थिए भनिन्छ। केही समयपछितिरको एक पत्रमा 'अधि श्री ५ महाराजा रामशाहका पालादेखि गोर्खा र धर्मा दुई दुध र पानी मिसाया जस्तो दोस्ती? भन्ने उल्लेख भएकाले रामशाहसँग सम्बन्ध कायम गर्ने भूटानी राजा स्यावदुङ नामगेले नै रहेको हुनुपर्छ। राजा रामशाहले त्यही दोस्ती कायम राख्न धर्माका लामालाई पूर्वतिरका ६ गुम्बा दिएको कुराको पनि यसै पत्रमा उल्लेख छ। यी ६ गुम्बाका सबै नाम त प्राप्त छैनन् तर त्यस पत्रमा एउटा 'पाते गुम्बा'को भने उल्लेख गरिएको छ।^३

सन् १६३६-१७०८ ई. (वि.सं. १६९३-१७६५)को बीचमा जार्जेन चोस्जे दामचो पैडकर लामाले नेपालमा आई भूटानी गुम्बा स्थापना गरेको उल्लेख पनि पाइन्छ। त्यसैताका नेपालका राजार मन्त्रीले स्वयम्भू र बोधनाथमा भूटानीहरूलाई धार्मिक मामलामा स्वायत्तता प्रदान गरेका थिए।^४

राजा नरभूपाल शाहको समयमा भूटानसँगको सम्बन्ध अझै दरिलो हुन गयो। नरभूपाल शाहले वि.सं. १७९८ मा एउटा ताम्रपत्र गरिदिई गोर्खाको नक्थली गुम्बा लोपा लामालाई र छोड लामालाई चुमावन, घेलीङ, चुमेगाउँ र गोथान दान गरेको उल्लेख पाइन्छ।^५ भनिन्छ, नरभूपाल शाहको सन्तान नहुँदा भूटानी लामा (लोपा लामा)का आशिर्वाद पाए पछि पृथ्वी नारायण शाहको जन्म भएको थियो। यसैबाट प्रभावित भई नरभूपाल शाहले भूटानी लामालाई माथि उल्लेखित ५ गुम्बाहरू दान गरेका थिए। फेरी अर्को थरिको वर्णन अनुसार नरभूपाल शाहको पालामा केरुङ र भुंगाको दो सौधमा भोट फौजले गोर्खाली फौजलाई घेरी राखेको बेलामा भूटानी लामाले सन्धि गराई दिएकाले नरभूपाल शाहले त्यसको गुनवापत भूटानका लामालाई नक्थली र पुंभो गाउँका जग्गा दिएका थिए।^६ यी गाउँहरूपछितिर थपि दिँदा पनि अगाडि नै यहाँ गुम्बाहरू भूटानी लामाको अधिकारमा रहेको देखिन्छ। पछि पृथ्वीनारायण शाहले आफ्नो एकीकरण अभियान पश्चात लोपा लामालाई स्वयम्भूनाथ मन्दिर र त्यसको २० गाउँ गुठीका साथै आफूले विजय गरेको क्षेत्रभित्रको १२ घ्याङ गुम्बा र गुठी समेत प्रदान गरेको उल्लेख पनि पाइन्छ।^६ तर यी १२ घ्याङ गुम्बामा कुन कुन पर्दथे भन्ने कुराको उल्लेख भने पाइएको छैन।

रणबहादुर शाहको पालामा पनि यो सम्बन्ध निकट एवं घनिष्ठ रह्यो। रणबहादुर शाह कहाँ भूटानी लामाले भेट गरी "हजुरको हजुरबुबा (अर्थात् पृथ्वीनारायण शाह) देवाधर्मको आशिर्वाद पाएर जन्मनु भएको थियो" भन्ने कुरा दर्शाई नरभूपाल शाहले

गरिदिएको लालमोहर समेत देखाई दिंदा रणबहादुर शाह अतिनै प्रसन्न भएका र त्यसैबेला उनले देवाधर्मलाई नेपाल २० खेत पहाड तर्फको १५।२० गाउँ दिई बक्स विर्ताको लालमोहर गरिदिएको कुरा पनि देवमाला वंशावलीमा छ।^९ यी गाउँको सम्पूर्ण आयस्रोतले हाल स्वयम्भू चैत्य देखि पश्चिमतिर रहेको गुम्बाको निर्माण गरिएको थियो।^८

श्री ५ गिर्वाणयुद्ध विक्रमको पालामा वि.सं. १८५८ मा ६ गुम्बाहरू भूटानका देवाधर्मलाई प्रदान गरेको उल्लेख पाइन्छ। यी ६ गुम्बाहरूमा पुंङि गुम्बा, बालथली गुम्बा, नागन्या गुम्बा, लिस्याखु गुम्बा, चरिकोट गुम्बा, र छुमाने गुम्बा थिए।^९ केही लेखकहरूले वि.सं. १८४५ तिर सिक्किम र नेपालका बीच लडाईं पर्दा भूटानले सिक्किमको सहयोग गरेको हुनाले त्यसैको विरोधमा नेपालले अधिकांश गुम्बाहरूमा भूटानको अधिकार खोसेको उल्लेख गरेका छन्।^{१०} उनीहरूका अनुसार त्यसपछि ६ गुम्बाहरूमा मात्र भूटानको अधिकार रहन गयो। तर वंशावलीमा भने अर्कै प्रसंगको उल्लेख गरिएको छ। त्यस अनुसार वि.सं. १९११ मा नेपाल र भोटको लडाईं पर्दा देवाधर्मका लामाले गुम्बामा रहेका भिक्षुहरू पठाई भोटलाई मद्दत दिएको हुनाले रणबहादुर शाहको पालामा प्रदान गरिएको ५०० उट्टीको जग्गा छाडेर अरू रेकरमा परिणत गरियो।^{११} यो कुरा वि.सं. १९१९ को सुरेन्द्र विक्रम शाहको एउटा लालमोहरबाट पनि प्रमाणित हुन्छ। साथै त्यस लालमोहरमा वि.सं. १९१२ मा 'रेकर' लागेको जग्गा मध्ये स्वयम्भू, नकथली घ्याङ, र हाकु, कल्यारी, किमडोल यति जग्गा पुनः बहाल गरिएको उल्लेख छ।^{१२} यसबाट देवमाला वंशावलीमा जो 'रेकरमा परिणत भएको' भन्ने उल्लेख छ, त्यो पछि आएर सुस्त सुस्त फुकुवा हुँदै गएको थियो भन्ने कुरालाई यस पत्रले स्पष्ट पारेको छ। यस्तै सन् १८६३ ई (वि.सं. १९२०)मा भूटानका तत्कालिन देवराजा, मागुर प्रान्तका पेनलप उर्गेन दोर्जी आदि सहितको प्रतिनिधि मण्डल प्रधानमन्त्री जङ्गबहादुरसँग भेट गरी भूटानमा आफ्नो लागि चाहिने गोली गठ्ठा, बन्दूक लिई फर्केका थिए।^{१३} यसरी एक पटक क्षीण हुँदै गएको धार्मिक सम्बन्ध पुनः प्रगाढ हुन थाले पछि यस्ता सम्बन्धमा गाँसिएका मुलुकहरूले आ-आफ्ना प्रतिनिधि मण्डल मार्फत विभिन्न सरसौगातहरू बेला मौकामा पठाउने गर्दथे। यो क्रम श्री ३ वीर सम्शेरको पालसम्म यथावत् रहेको थियो। यो कुरा एउटा पछिको पत्रबाट पनि स्पष्ट हुन्छ।^{१४} वि.सं. १९६४को पत्रमा स्वयम्भू, किमडोल, हाकुचा, नागाथली र डाँडा गाउँ घ्याङको उल्लेख छ।^{१५} यस्तै वि.सं. १९६५ को अर्को पत्रमा स्वयम्भू, किमडोल नगथली, थोडमोन, हाकुघ्याङ र डाँडा गाउँको उल्लेख पाइन्छ।^{१६} यस प्रकार पछि सम्म पनि नेपालका यी गुम्बाहरूमा भूटानीहरूको धार्मिक अधिकार रहेको देखिन्छ। वि.सं. १९७२ सम्म माथिको समेत जम्मा १६ वटा गुम्बाहरू देवाधर्मको अधीनमा भएका देखिन्छन्।^{१७} तर यसमा ती गुम्बाहरूको नाम भने उल्लेख गरिएको छैन। यसबाट नेपालका ती गुम्बाहरूमा भूटानी लामाहरूले पूजा-आजा गर्ने तथा तिनको आयस्रोतमा भूटानका धर्म राजाको पूर्ण अधिकार भएकोबाट यस्तो सम्बन्धले पछिसम्म पनि दुई देशबीच सांस्कृतिक एवं धार्मिक संबन्धमा व्यापक स्थान लिएको देखिन्छ।

स्वयम्भू चैत्यको पुनः निर्माण

वि.सं. १९६४ मा स्वयम्भू चैत्यमा आगलागी भयो। १९६४ आश्विन २८ गते भूटानका काजी उर्गमान सिक्किम गएको बेलामा त्यहाँ २ व्यक्तिहरू छेनलीमा लामा र उईक नागेलले भेट गरी भूटानका देवाधर्मसँग सहमती पाए अनुसार स्वयम्भूको जिर्णोद्धारको लागि नेपालबाट अनुमति पाउनको लागि पत्र पठाएका थिए। त्यसमा अरू जम्मै सहयोग सिक्किमले गर्ने तर पुजारीको खर्च भने भूटानले ब्यहोर्ने ब्यहोरा उल्लेख गरिएको थियो। तर साविक पुजारीले चाहिँ सिक्किमलाई सो गुम्बाको पुनःनिर्माण गर्न नदिने खिचोला गरे। त्यसको सट्टा बरू पूर्ण रूपमा बनाउन सो गुम्बा भूटानलाई नै जिम्मा दिने भन्ने विन्ती पत्र श्री ३ मा चढाएका थिए।^{१८} फलस्वरूप सिक्किमले आर्थिक सहयोग मात्र गर्ने निर्णय भए अनुसार सिक्किमले यसमा ७००००- रूपियाँको सहयोग गरेको थियो। भोटलेपनि यस जीर्णोद्धार कार्यमा सहयोग गरेको थियो। पछि भूटानलाई भोटु पाण्डले एउटा पत्र पठाई चन्दाको लागि अनुरोध गरेका थिए। भूटानका राजा जर्गेन वाङचुकले यो पत्र पाउँदा खुशी भई चन्दा संकलन गरी स्वयम्भू चैत्यको पुनः निर्माण कार्यको रेखदेख गर्न सेराव दोर्जेलाई प्रतिनिधिको रूपमा नेपाल पठाएका थिए। यसको लागि भूटानबाट राजा स्वयंले भा. रू. ४०,०००- सैराव दोर्जेले १५,०००- हुक्पालामाका आफन्तहरूले १०,०००- र हुक्पालामाका शिष्यहरूले १०,०००- र अरू चन्दा गरी जम्मा ८५,०००-रूपियाँ संकलन गरी पठाईदिएका थिए।^{१९} यसप्रकार यस जीर्णोद्धारको काम वि.सं. १९७५मा आएर मात्र समाप्त भएको थियो।^{२०}

स्वयम्भू घ्याङ र त्यसको पुजारी

स्वयम्भू स्तूपको पश्चिमी भागमा अवस्थित स्वयम्भू घ्याङले भूटानसँगको धार्मिक सम्बन्धमा ठूलो महत्त्व राखेको छ। यस गुम्बाको निर्माण वि.सं. १८५० (ने.सं. १९१३)को लगभगमा भएको थियो। यसको निर्माणको झण्डै १९५ वर्ष पछि यो भत्कन गयो।^{२१} वि.सं. १९६५ (ने.सं. १०२८) मा श्री ३ चन्द्रसंसेरकी महारानी संग मीत लगाउन भनी सिक्किमका राजा तासी नामगेल र रानी यहाँ आएका थिए। यिनले यो घ्याङको दुरावस्था देखी यसको जिर्णोद्धारका लागि ९००- रूपैयाँ र ४ तोला सुन दिएका थिए। तर त्यसबेलाको घ्याङको पुजारी छोईसी नामगेलले सो संपूर्ण रूपियाँ र सुन मासेर खाएको हुनाले त्यसको उजुर पर्दा सिक्किम र नेपाल सरकारको तर्फबाट बुझ्न पठाइयो। त्यसमा छोईसी नामगेल कै कसूर देखिएको हुनाले उनी थुनामा परेको कुराको उल्लेख केही समय पछिको एउटा पत्रमा पाइन्छ।^{२२} वि.सं. १९६६ मा घ्याङको जिर्णोद्धार समाप्त भएको थियो। यो घ्याङ (गुम्बा)मा नेपाली र तिब्बती कला शैलीको समन्वयात्मक छाप अंकित गरेको पाइन्छ।

नेपालमा रहेका भूटानी गुम्बा (घ्याङ) हरूमा सबैभन्दा बढि महत्त्व स्वयम्भू घ्याङको देखिन्छ। यसको महत्त्वको उल्लेख विभिन्न कागज पत्रमा पाइन्छ। स्वयम्भू घ्याङको पूजा-आजाको जिम्मा भूटान (देवाधर्म) लाई प्रदान गरिएको थियो ता पनि घ्याङको पूजा आजा चलाउने, त्यसको हिसाव राख्ने पुजारीको नियुक्ति भूटान र नेपाल सरकार

संयुक्त भई गर्दथे। पुजारी हुनको लागि तन्त्रशास्त्रमा पारंगत लामा हुनु पर्दथ्यो। यस्ता लामा या त भूटानबाट ल्याइएका हुन्थे अथवा नेपालमै बसोबास गरेका पनि हुन पाउँथे। स्वयम्भू घ्याङको पुजारी हुन चाहने पुजारीहरूले एक अर्कालाई आरोप प्रत्यारोप लगाई नेपाल सरकार तथा भूटान सरकार समक्ष उजुर गर्ने गर्थे। यस प्रकारको हानथाप त्यसबेला प्रसस्त हुने गर्थ्यो। स्वयम्भू घ्याङको पुजारी हुनलाई यति ज्यादा हानथाप हुनुको कारण स्वयम्भू घ्याङको अरू घ्याङ भन्दा धेरै आय श्रोत भएको हुनाले पनि हो। साथै यो घ्याङ राजधानीमै अवस्थित भएकोले पनि यसको महत्त्व थियो। येनतेन ग्याम छो र चिनीया लामा बीच यस विषयमा त्यसबेला ठूलो आरोप प्रत्यारोप चलेको थियो। यसको साथै अरू लामाहरूले पनि चिनियाँ लामाका परिवारको विरुद्धमा विन्तिपत्र पारेका थिए। तत्कालीन कागजपत्रहरूले यस्ता धेरै कुराहरूको जानकारी खुलाएका छन्। वि.सं. १९४० तिर सो घ्याङको पुजारीको रूपमा येनतेन ग्यामछो लामा थिए। तर येनतेन ग्याम छोले त्यहाँ हिसाब गोलमाल गरेको, मालताल वेपत्ता पारेको र घ्याङ विग्रे भत्केकोमा पनि लापवाही गरेको हुनाले उनलाई वर्खास्त गरियो। उनको ठाउँ बोद्ध बस्ने चिनीयाँ लामा रत्नबज्रले प्राप्त गरे।^{२३} तर वि.सं. १९६५ बैशाखमा चन्द्र संशेरले चिनियाँ लामा बुद्धबज्र लामालाई 'अब देखि तिमिले सो घ्याङको मालमत्ता बुझेर पूजा आज्ञा चलाउने काम गर' भनी सनद गरीदिएको देखिन्छ।^{२४} यसबाट रत्नबज्र र बुद्धबज्र दुवै बाबु छोरालाई सामुन्नेमा राखेर कागज गरीदिएको स्पष्ट छ। वि.सं. १९६९को पत्रमा यस कुराको उल्लेख पनि पाइन्छ। यसमा भूटानका एजेन्ट-राजा उर्गेन दोर्जीले चिनियाँ लामा बुद्धबज्रका बाबु छोरा समक्ष लेखिएको चिठीमा स्वयम्भूको सेर्मा उठ्ती उठाउनेबाट प्रत्येक साल ७५०/- नेपाली महेन्द्रमल्ली उर्गेन दोर्जी मार्फत चिनियाँ लामाका बाबुछोराले देवाधर्ममा चढाउने कुराको उल्लेख छ।^{२५} पत्रमा यो पनि उल्लेख हुन आएको छ कि त्यसबेला स्वयम्भू घ्याङको पुजारीको पद पाउन देवाधर्ममा प्रशस्त विन्तिहरू चढाउने गरिन्थे। त्यसैले यस विन्ति पत्रमा देवाधर्मा सरकारमा जो सुकै लामाले विन्ति गरेपनि 'अब देखि देवाधर्मले सुनीबक्सने छैन' भन्ने उल्लेख परेको छ। वि.सं. १९७१ आश्विन २० गतेको एउटा पत्रमा बुद्ध बज्र लामाले देवाधर्मलाई स्वयम्भू घ्याङ गुठीको आम्दानी जम्मा ३७५।०४ पैसा बुझाएको उल्लेख पनि छ।^{२६}

पछि चिनियाँ लामा बुद्ध बज्रको विरुद्धमा प्रशस्त विन्तिपत्रहरू पर्नथाले। येनतेन ग्यामछोका छोराहरू यस कार्यमा अगाडि थिए। यसवाहेक अरू लामाहरू पनि यसमा शामिल थिए। वि.सं. १९७२ श्रावण महिनाको पत्रमा विरेलामाले गुन्जलामाको विरुद्धमा दिएको मुद्दामा स्वयम्भूका पुजारी गुन्जलामाले स्वयम्भूको संपत्ति हिनामिना गरेको उल्लेख छ। तर त्यसमा बुद्धबज्रले स्वयं 'पुजारीको रूपमा मै छु भन्ने स्पष्टीकरण दिनुपरेको र त्यसको छानबिन गर्न जाँच अदालत बाट 'बुद्धबज्र पुजारीको रूपमा कहिले देखि छन्? निजको सनद छ छैन? भएमा तुरुन्त पठाउनु' भन्ने गुठी लगतलाई लेखेको पत्र^{२७} पनि यस परिप्रेक्ष्यमा महत्वपूर्ण छ। येन तेन ग्याम छोका छोरा छोईसी नामगेलले वि.सं. १९७२ माघमा श्री ३ माहाराज समक्ष बुद्धबज्रको विरुद्धमा एउटा लामो विन्तिपत्र पारे।^{२८} यस विन्तिपत्रमा

उनले आफ्नो बाबुको पालादेखि नै पाएको सनदको उल्लेख गर्दै स्वयम्भू ध्याङ्को पुजामा आफ्नो पूर्ण हक भएको दावी गरेका छन्। यो विन्तिपत्र परेपछि श्री ३ महाराजबाट सो सम्बन्धी कुरो बुझी जाहेर गर्नु भन्ने तोक समेत भयो। यो कुरा थाहापाएपछि छोईसी नामगेलको विरुद्धमा पालचोक ध्याङ्को लामा रीडा चुम्बा लामाले श्री ३ समक्ष वि.सं. १९७३ बैशाखमा अर्को विन्तिपत्र पारे। २९ यसपत्रमा छोईसी नामगेलले सीक्किमका राजाबाट स्वयम्भू ध्याङ् जिर्णोद्धारका लागि प्रदान गरिएको १००१-रूपैया र ४ तोला सुन मासेर खाएको आरोप छ। अन्तमा रीडा चुम्बा लामाले आफूलाई स्वयम्भू ध्याङ्को पुजारीमा नियुक्त गरि पाउन अनुरोध समेत गरेका छन्। वि.सं. १९७८ मा बुद्धबज्र लामाको मृत्यु भएको हुनाले त्यसको सम्पूर्ण कारोवार उनकै छोरा पुण्यबज्र लामाले सम्हाले। यसको १ वर्षपछि वि.सं. १९७९ फाल्गुणमा देवाधर्मका राजा उर्गेन वाङ्चुकलाई श्री ३ महाराजाका तर्फबाट लेखेको पत्रमा 'पुण्यबज्र लामाले ध्याङ्को पुजा-आजा राम्रैसँग गर्न सक्ने हुनाले अर्को लामा पठाउने काम नगर्नु' भन्ने स्पष्ट उल्लेख गरिएको छ।^{२०} यसपछि पुण्यबज्र पुजारीको रूपमा रहेतापनि उनको विरुद्धमा पनि उजुरी र विन्ति पत्र चढाउने काम यथावत नै रहेको थियो। वि.सं. १९८० मा सोक् लामाले पुण्यबज्रका नाउँमा ज्यादती गरेको उजुरी गरे। यसबारे छानविन हुँदा उजुरवालाको मुखैको कुरामात्र हुनाले अब उप्रान्तलाई धर्मको काम हुनाले पुण्यबज्रले पनि 'राम्रा हिसाव सँग पूजा चलाउने' भन्ने उल्लेख परेको छ।^{२१} यसबाट स्वयम्भू ध्याङ्को पुजारीको सम्बन्धमा अरूलाई निकै आरोप प्रत्यारोप लगाएर सो पदमा आफूलाई आसीन गराउन खोज्ने परम्परा त्यसबेला प्रसस्त रहेको पाइन्छ। त्यसबेला स्वयम्भू ध्याङ्को पुजारी हुन पाउनु महत्त्वको कुरा भएको हुनाले नै लामाहरू बीच यस किसिमको प्रतिस्पर्धा चलेको थियो। जे होस् यस कुराले नेपाल र भूटानको मैत्री संबन्धलाई भने असर पारेको थिएन यसको विपरित दुवै देशको पत्राचार तथा कोशेली बोकेर जाने टोलीहरू मार्फत सुनिश्चित धार्मिक सम्पर्कले अझ प्रगाढ हुने मौका पाएको थियो भन्न सकिन्छ।

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RESEARCH NOTE

नेपाल भूटान आर्थिक सम्बन्ध: ऐतिहासिक स्वरूप

सुशीला मानन्धर
ने.ए.अ.के., त्रि.वि.

समान भूराजनैतिक परिस्थितिको सामना गरिरहेका दक्षिण एशियाका दुई विकासोन्मुख मुलुकहरू नेपाल र भूटान बीच सन् १९८३ ई. को जुन महीनामा कुटनैतिक सम्बन्ध स्थापना भयो। तर यस औपचारिक सम्बन्धले यी दुई देश बीच आर्थिक सम्बन्धलाई बढावा दिएको देखिंदै। अझ भनौ १९७२ ई. देखि नै दुई देश बीच व्यापारिक सम्बन्ध स्थापना गर्ने अथक प्रयास हुँदा हुँदै पनि हालसम्म यसतर्फ कुनै औपचारिक सम्झौता हुन सकेको छैन। यसै परिस्थितिलाई दृष्टि गोचर गरी नेपाल र भूटान बीच आर्थिक सम्बन्ध नरहेको कुरा विद्वानहरू दावी गर्छन्। साथै यी दुई देश बीचको सम्बन्धको ऐतिहासिक पृष्ठ भूमिलाई केलाउँदा पनि यी देशहरू बीच स्पष्ट र प्रत्यक्ष आर्थिक सम्बन्ध किटान गरिएको पाउन गाह्रो छ। बरू निकट छिमेकीको रूपमा रहेका हुनाले प्राचीन कालदेखि नै यी दुई राज्यहरू एक आपसमा सम्बन्धित रहदै गएको कुरा नेपाल एवं भूटानको इतिहासबाट प्रष्ट हुन्छ।^१ किनकि शत्रौ शताब्दिमा भूटानका एक धर्मगुरु अवतारी लामा धमचु पेदकार (Damches Ped-d-Kar) मार्फत गोरखाका राजा रामशाह र धर्माका (भूटानका) राजा नावाङ नामग्याल बीच आपसी मैत्री सम्बन्ध स्थापना गरिएको थियो। यसपछि भूटान र गोरखा एवं नेपाल (उपत्यका) बीच धार्मिक र सांस्कृतिक सम्बन्ध मजबुत हुँदै गएको कुरा विभिन्न स्रोतहरूले प्रमाणित गर्छन्।^२ यसरी सरसर्ती हेर्दा नेपाल भूटान बीच धार्मिक र सांस्कृतिक सम्बन्ध बाहेक अन्य सम्बन्ध नरहेको देखिन्छ। तर सोही सम्बन्धहरूको गहन अध्ययन गरेको खण्डमा यी दुई देशहरू बीच अन्य सम्बन्ध र क्रियाकलापहरू (आर्थिक, सामाजिक, राजनैतिक एवं कूटनैतिक) पनि कायम रहेको तथ्य थाहा पाइन्छ। धार्मिक एवं सांस्कृतिक सम्बन्धहरूको शुरूवात संगसंगै नेपाल र भूटान बीच एक अर्काको देशका रैतीहरूले भूस्वामित्व प्राप्त गर्नु, धार्मिक एवं प्राविधिक सल्लाहकारहरूको नियुक्ति र आदान प्रदान हुनु, एक अर्का बीच आर्थिक सहयोग जुटाउनु, अप्रत्यक्ष व्यापार चलाउनु जस्ता आर्थिक क्रियाकलापहरू भएको पाइन्छ। यस्कारण नेपाल र भूटान कुनै आर्थिक सम्झौता अन्तर्गत प्रत्यक्ष रूपमा नबाँधिए तापनि परम्परा देखिनै यी दुई देश बीच अप्रत्यक्ष आर्थिक

सम्बन्ध रहँदै आएको कुरा नकार्न सकिदैन। नेपाल भूटान आर्थिक सम्बन्धको ऐतिहासिक स्वरूप विविध श्रोतहरूको आधारमा निम्न रूपमा निर्धारण गर्न सकिन्छ।

१. भूस्वामित्व एवं जनशक्तिको आदान प्रदान

नेपाल र भूटान दुवै कृषि प्रधान मुलुकहरू भएका हुनाले यहाँको आर्थिक जीवनमा जमीनको प्रमुख भूमिका रहेको छ। नेपालको आर्थिक इतिहासमा राणा शासनको अन्तसम्म अर्थात् सन् १९५० ई. सम्म जमीन नै आर्थिक एवं प्रशासनिक क्रियाकलापको एक मुख्य माध्यम रहीरहेको थियो। त्यस समय कुनै पनि सरकारी नोकरी गर्ने मानिसको जिविकोपार्जनको साधन जागिरी, निवृत्तिभरण, पेन्सन आदि समेत नगदी रकममा नदिई सो को सट्टा केही जग्गा दिने र त्यसैको आम्दानीबाट निजले जीवन घान्नु पर्ने व्यवस्था रहेको थियो। यस्तो महत्वपूर्ण आर्थिक श्रोत र साधनको रूपमा रहेको भूमि माथि कुनै पनि कार्य सिद्धिको लागि कुनै व्यक्ति वा संस्थाले केही हक प्राप्त गर्छ भने आर्थिक दृष्टिबाट स्वतः सम्बन्धित रहेको मान्न सकिन्छ। नेपाल र भूटान बीच १७ औं शताब्दी देखि निरन्तर रूपमा यस रूपको संबन्ध कायम रहँदै आएका प्रमाणहरू पाइन्छन्। जस्तै:

क) नेपालमा भूटानी धर्मगुरुहरूको हकः सत्रौं शताब्दीमा नेपाल र भूटान बीच धार्मिक एवं सांस्कृतिक सम्बन्ध स्थापना भएपछि नेपालमा भूटानको धार्मिक प्रतिनिधिहरू नेपाल बस्ने एवं गुठी जग्गाहरू उपभोग गर्न पाउने व्यवस्था भएको थियो। पूर्वी नेपालमा राम शाहले भूटानका धार्मिक प्रतिनिधिलाई प्रदान गरेका छः गुम्बाहरूमा खिचोला उत्पन्न भई भूटानी प्रतिनिधिले पाएको दुःख निवारण गर्ने उद्देश्यले धर्माका राजाले श्री ५ एवं श्री ५ का काजी (मन्त्रीमण्डल)लाई लेखेका २ पत्रहरू र श्री ५ ले धर्माका राजालाई सन् १८०१ ई.मा सो गुम्बाहरूमा पुनः थपौती दिइएका पत्रहरू (नेपाल, २०४५:१३६१३९) प्रकाशमा आएका छन्। यस अनुसार रामशाहको पालामा नै भूटानले पुण्डी गुम्बा, वालथली गुम्बा र प्रशस्त जग्गा गुठी स्वरूप पाएका थिए भन्ने बुझिन्छ। यस्तै कृष्ण शाहले (१६५६-१६७७ई.) गोरखाका पश्चिमी बौद्ध गुम्बाहरू संचालनार्थ भूटानी लामाहरूलाई प्रशस्त गुठी जग्गा दिएका थिए।^३ यसैगरी नरभूपाल शाहले (सन् १७१६-१७४२ई.) पनि ल्होपा लामाको नाममा नकथली गुम्बा कुश विर्ता गरीदिएका थिए। (माकडोनाल्ड १९७३:६), शाके सम्वत १७०८ (सन् १७९५ई.) मा नेपालका तत्कालीन राजा रणबहादुर शाहले भूटानी लामाको नाममा २० (बीस) रोपनी खेत र पन्ध्र बीस गाऊँहरू विर्ता बक्सका थिए। यी खेत र गाऊँहरूको उठती आयस्ता बाट स्वयम्भू चैत्यको पूजा अर्चना गर्ने व्यवस्था गरिएको थियो (शाक्य, ने.सं. १०९८:२६७)। स्वयम्भू गुठीका रूपमा यसरी प्रदान गरिएको जग्गाहरू यस प्रकार छन्: नकथली, हाकुच्यारी, लामागाउँ, डाँडागाउँ, कीमडोल, सिम्भू, स्याखु, भुगदेउ, वाडथली, लीस्याखु, चरिकोट, गोम्बागाऊँ (मुस्ताङ क्षेत्र?)^४। यी माथि उल्लिखित भूभागहरूमा भूटानी धार्मिक प्रतिनिधिलाई भूस्वामित्व प्रदान गरी ती जग्गाको आम्दानीका साथै ती बस्तीबाट कर उठाइ खाने हक दिइएको थियो। यसरी भूस्वामित्व प्रदान गरिएको

हुँदा तत्कालीन मन्त्रीमण्डलले (चारकाजीहरूको शील छाप समेत) स्थानिय जनतालाई 'अब देखि उनीहरूले भूटान सरकार अथवा उनका प्रतिनिधिलाई कर बुझ्नुका साथै उनीहरूकै आज्ञा पालन गर्नु' भन्ने आदेश पनि दिइएको थियो।^५ यसरी नेपाल सरकारले भूटानी प्रतिनिधिलाई जग्गा प्रदान गरेपछि त्यसको परिचालन र कर उठाउन समय समयमा दुवै सरकारको आपसी समझदारीबाट निर्धारित नियमहरू उपयोग हुँदै आएका थिए। तर सन् १८५५ई. मा नेपाल भूटान बीच यस प्रकारको आर्थिक संलग्नता र समझदारी बीच केही गतिरोध आयो। यसको कारणको रूपमा १८५५-५६ ई.सं.को नेपाल भोट युद्धमा भूटानले नेपालको विरुद्ध भोटलाई सहयोग दिएको आंशकामा मुस्ताङ बाहेक अन्यत्र नेपालको सीमा भित्र भूटानले पाउँदै आएको सम्पूर्ण आर्थिक हक र सुविधा नेपाल सरकारले खोस्नु थियो (दुंगेल, १९८६:११-१३)^६। पछि भूटान सरकारले नेपाली मूलका तीनजना भूटानी नागरिकहरू नीनीराम सिंह, ध्वरिया र हरिसिंह रहेको प्रतिनिधि मण्डल पठाई उनीहरू मार्फत स्पष्टिकरण दिई उक्त भ्रमलाई हटाएको थियो (मानन्धर १९८९:पृ.७२-७३)। यसको साथै नेपाल स्थित भूटानी धार्मिक प्रतिनिधिले कमाण्डर इन चीफ कृष्ण बहादुर राणा समक्ष "सन् १८५५ ई.मा खोसिएका जग्गाहरू मध्ये 'नकथली, सिम्भू, हाकुगाउँ, कल्यारी र किमडोल मात्र भए पनि फिर्ता पाएमा सरकारको जय मनाई बस्ता हुँ" भन्ने निवेदन पेश गरेको थियो। यसपछि श्री ५ सुरेन्द्र विक्रम शाहबाट वि.सं.१९१९ बैशाख बदि २१ रोज १ मा (सन् १८६२ ई.) लालमोहर प्रदान गरी माग गरिएका उक्त पाँच इलाकाहरूमा सन् १८५५ देखिनै भूटानको यथावत हक कायम गरी दिएका थिए (दुंगेल, १९८६:१२-१३)। यसरी परम्परा देखि नेपालमा भूटानले प्राप्त गर्दै आएको भूस्वामित्वमा सन् १८५५ ई. देखि केही गतिरोध आएता पनि नेपाल र भूटान बीचको धार्मिक एवं सांस्कृतिक सम्बन्ध र आर्थिक क्रियाकलापहरू सुचारू रूपमानै संचालित हुँदै रहे।

ख) भूटानमा नेपाली रैतिहरू र उनीहरूको हक:- भूटानको विकास, निर्माण, सुसंगठन र सुरक्षा जस्ता कार्यको लागि भूटानी लामा गुरु धमचु पेदकार ले आफ्नो साथमा भूटान लगेका नेपाली कालिगढ र दक्षजनशक्तिले भूटानमा स्थापत्य र अन्य कलाको विकास गर्न ठूलो भूमिका खेलेका थिए।^७ यी नेपालीहरूले भूटानको प्रशासकिक र सैनिक सुदृढिकरणमा मदत पुर्‍याउनुका साथै भूटानीहरूलाई कृषि, पशुपालन, कालीगढी र बन्ध व्यापारको कार्यमा समेत प्रशिक्षण दिई ती क्षेत्रहरूको विकासमा सहयोग गरी भूटानलाई एउटा सुरक्षित, सुसंगठित एवं आवाद र गुल्जार राज्यको रूपमा स्थापित गराएका थिए भन्ने कुरा विभिन्न देव दुंगेलबाट प्रकाशित शाके सम्बत १४८२ फागुण शुक्ल ५ तिथि (सन. १५६० इ) का अधिलेखका निम्न वाक्यहरूबाट थाहा हुन्छ:-

"उप्रान्त हामी हिजो गोर्खाका थियौं आज हामी धर्माका छौं। धर्मा राजाका रितिथिति मान्ने संकल्प गरेका छौं। उंचो तिष्टा, उंचो पगला कटमपतन, दक्षिण गोल्लई ढीप, उतर भोट जाने हिमाल भित्रको रेखदेख गर्न र दुस्मनलाई खलबल

पार्न, देशमा छिर्न नपाउने गर्ने गरी वेणुपाध्या, कालुपाध्या, सेतु थापा, विष्णु साही थकुरी, बुधिनथापा मगर, विरू गुरूङ्ग, दाहसाह गुरूङ्ग, माने मुर्मि, सुने मुर्मि, विष्णु जैसी, सेतुमान नेवार, न्याहुले नेवार, जिम्मे खम्मु किरांती, नैमि पांढे, जिमु आले मगर, सनने कामी तीन कोरी (६०) घर थर मिले धर्मराजा मानि सुरक्षा पाएका छौं।———”

“..... कोचे मेचेका राजा स्वर्ग देउ (कोचेमेचेसँग मिल्न आउ भनि) संझाउन फकाउन आए (उनीहरूलाई यी नेपालीहरूले निम्न नकारात्मक जवाफ दिएका थिए.)

उप्रान्त राम शाहले धर्मराजासँग मित्रता गरि शिष्य शाख जस्तो भएका हुन, हाम्रो राज्य र तिम्रो राज्य यौटै हो. एक भएर रहनु पर्छ, यो वचन मानेर बाचा बन्धन गरेका थिए। धर्मका समर्थ गरेका छौं, धर्म राजाको राज्यमा बरू तिमिहरू मिल्न आउ भनि उपाध्याय, वेणु उपाध्याय, कालु उपाध्याय योगीनाथहरूले भने।”

“.....धर्मराजा देवराजा गोर्खानाथ नेपाल पशुपतिनाथ समेतबाट ल्याएका घर थरलाई उनीहरूको ल्यावत (पौरख) हेरेर जातभात अनुसार राज्यको कजाङ्गी, विर्ता, मण्डल, पर्गना (क्षेत्री) भाग गरेर छुट्याई दिए। तिब्बत लासा जाने आउने निकासको बाटो बनाई घर बनाई बस्ने, बुधिन थापाले राजा पछी पाए, सेतु पाध्याय गरू गोस्वामी भए। पिथुं आले, विजुंगुरूङ्ग काजी सिंपोन भए। न्याहुलीका देवान पेनलप भए, अरू घरथर सैन्य सिपाहीलाई पनि विर्ता बांढी दिए। त्यो आपते जंगलका तस्कर लखेती गाई भैसी पाल्ने इलम बांढी दिए। काजि, पेनलप, सिमपोन, गोर्खाई मण्डललाई हाति दिए। आउने जाने बाटोको निकास हेरी पालो पहर गरेर राम्ररी सुति थाति गरे। मालिका देवीको स्थापना गरे, उठती बढती पोत तिरो उठाए।

उप्रान्त त्यसपछि धर्मराजाको मेलामा कामारकामाक्षे दरङ्गका भुईमा, मेचेकोचे, राजवंसी, भोटे, मुङ्गलान समेतका आई मेला गुल्जार गरे, घोडा, हात्ती, दख्खु राडी कमल लिने दिने काममा भगडा परी कुटाकुट भयो, दुई चारजना धर्मराजाका कामरूपका भरे। काजी विराज गुरूङ्ग, पुर्णे कटुवाल, मानविर कुंवलर वेणु पाध्या वेलाजी मेचे मलिक भुइ, विजय आहोम आदि मिलेर त्यो सानु भगडा मेटाए” (हिमालचुली वर्ष २५, अंक १ र ४, १९८७ जनवरी १८ र फेब्रुवरी ८)

तर यस अभिलेखको सत्यता बारे जाँच गर्न आवश्यक हुन्छ। कारण, शाके सम्वत १४८२ (ई.सन् १५६० ई.)मा लेखिएको यस अभिलेखमा रामशाहको वर्णन परेको छ। तर

राम शाह सत्रौं शताब्दिको प्रथम दशकमा मात्र गोरखाको राजगद्दीमा बसेका थिए। यस अभिलेखमा उल्लिखित मितिमा उनीराजा बनीसकेका थिएनन्। तैपनि सत्रौं शताब्दिमा नेपालले भूटानलाई प्राविधिक जनशक्तिको सहयोग दिएको कुराको चाहिँ भूटानी स्रोतहरूमा पनि उल्लेख गरिएका हुनाले यस कुरालाई पूर्णतया नकार्न भने सकिदैन। साथै यी नेपाली कालीगढहरूले भूटानमा निर्माण गरेका स्थापत्य एवं वास्तुकलाका प्रमाणहरू पारी, हा, टासिङ्ग्याङ्ग, देसिछोलीन जस्ता गुम्बाहरू र प्रशासनिक भवन एवं राजप्रासादहरू हालसम्म यथावत रहेका छन्। ती नेपालीहरूले त्यसताका चलाएको पंच देवल शैलीले भूटानी संस्कृतिमा बलियो जरा गाढेको छ राहुल (१९८३ ई. ५५)। धातु, काष्ठ शिल्प एवं चित्रकलामा पोख्त नेपाली (नेवार) कालिगढहरू सत्रौं शताब्दिखि भूटानको पुनाखा र थिम्पूमा कार्यरत रहेका र उनीहरूबाट भूटानीहरूले प्रशिक्षण समेत पाएका थिए। थिम्पूमा यस्ता नेपाली कालीगढहरूको एक बस्ती नै रहेको छ, जसलाई तिब्बती भाषामा बेबुना वा बेलपो (नेपालीहरूको बस्ती) भन्ने गरेका छन् (मेहरा १९४७:४९, राहुल, १९८३:५५)। यसका साथै भूटानका टासियाङ्गसे जिल्लास्थित गोमाङ्गखारा चैत्य र टोङ्गसा जिल्लास्थित छेम्दुञ्जी चैत्य नेपाली शैलीमा बनेका छन् (मेहरा, १९७४:५२)।

यी माथि उल्लिखित कुराहरूबाट पुष्टि हुन्छन् कि भूटानको विकास र निर्माणमा परम्परादेखि नै नेपाली कालीगढ एवं जनशक्तिले ठूलो भूमिका खेलिरहेको छ। यी नेपाली रैतीहरूले भूटानमा उचित हक पाई बसोबासको लागि पूर्ण सुविधा पाउँदै आएका छन्। यसरी प्रारम्भमा यी नेपालीहरूले सीमा क्षेत्र मात्र नभै राजधानी भित्र समेत आफ्नो बस्ती बसाल्ने हक पाएका थिए। पछि आएर भूटानमा नेपाली रैतीहरूको एक नयाँ बस्ती बसालियो। यस इलाकामा नेपालीहरूको हक पूर्णतया सुरक्षित गरियो। यहाँ सम्म कि यस बस्ती भित्र नेपाली मूलका रैती बाहेक अन्य जातिको व्यक्ति कसै गरी पनि बस्न नपाउने र ती नेपालीहरूलाई त्यहाँबाट कुनै प्रकारबाट उठाउन नपाउने व्यवस्था समेत गरियो। (मानन्धर, १९८९ १३१)

यसरी परम्परादेखि नै नेपालमा भूटानी धार्मिक प्रतिनिधीले भूस्वामित्व पाए जस्तै भूटानमा नेपाली कालीगढ एवं कार्यकर्ताहरूले आफ्नो बसोबास क्षेत्रको सुरक्षा प्राप्त गर्दै आएका छन्। यस्तो व्यवस्थालाई दुई देशबीच आपसी समझदारीमा गरिएको परम्परागत आर्थिक एवं प्राविधिक सम्बन्ध र सहयोगको रूपमा मान्न सकिन्छ।

२. आपसी आर्थिक सहयोग र परिचालन व्यवस्था

नेपालमा भूटानी गुम्बाहरू संचालनार्थ एवं नेपालका लागि भूटानी धार्मिक प्रतिनिधिहरूको जीविकोपार्जनका लागि नेपाल सरकारले समय समयमा गुठी जग्गाहरू प्रदान गरी सहयोग गर्दै आएको थियो। यिनै गुठीको आय परिचालन गर्न एवं गुम्बाहरूको संरक्षण एवं सम्बर्धन गर्न दुई देश बीच आपसी गरिएका सम्झौताहरूको पालना गर्नु, गराउनुका अतिरिक्त अन्य आर्थिक सहयोगहरू बढाउँदै सांस्कृतिक एवं धार्मिक सम्पदाको

संरक्षण र जीर्णोद्धार गर्दै आएको छन्। यस्ता कृयाकलापहरूको क्रमिक वर्णन तल प्रस्तुत गरिन्छ।

सन् १८१५ ई.मा नेपाल आएका भूटानी लामा साङ्ग ग्याल नोर्बुले बौद्धनाथ जिर्णोद्धार गरी १८१७ ई.मा प्रतिष्ठापन पूजा गरेर गएका थिए।^{१९} १८२५ ई.मा धर्मराजाले नेपालमा भूटानले परम्परादेखि उपभोग गर्दै आएको गुठीजग्गा पुननिर्माण गर्न राजमानसिंह र स्वयम्भू गुठीका तीनजना गुठियारहरूको नाममा रु. ३५१- प्रदान गरेको।^{१०} र १८२६ मा राजमानसिंहको नाममा रु. २११- पठाएका थिए। १८३१ मा आएर ती गुठी जग्गाहरूको प्रशासनिक कार्य चिताईदारबाट गराउनुको सत्ता सोझै अवतारी लामाले (धार्मिक प्रतिनिधि) संचालन गराउने व्यवस्था नेपाल सरकारले गरेको थियो। यस अनुसार नेपालस्थित धार्मिक प्रतिनिधिले नेपालका १४८ रोपनी गुठी जग्गाबाट उठ्ती हुने ३८ मुरी १० पाथी अन्न वा रु. २१।५८ पैसा मालपोत उठाई खान पाउने हक अवतारी लामालाई दिइएको थियो।^{१२} नेपाल सरकारको यो नयाँ व्यवस्थालाई भूटान सरकारले पनि समर्थन गरी सन् १८४२ मा चित्तईदार पदको उन्मुलन गरी धर्मालामालाबाट सो कार्य गराउन स्वीकार गरेका थिए।^{१३} १८५२ सन्मा राजमानसिंहले गुठी जग्गाको बहालबाट आम्दानी भएको रु. ५०१- धर्मा लामा जिग्मे छोग्याललाई बुझाएको थियो।^{१४} राजनैतिक कारणले गर्दा १८५५ सन्मा भूटानीहरूको सम्पूर्ण गुठी जग्गाहरू नेपाल सरकारले खोसि लिए। तर पछि पाँच क्षेत्र फिर्ता गरिएको थियो। फिर्ता पाएको सीमित जग्गाको आम्दानीबाट गुठीको दैनिक कार्य संचालन गरी बाँकी रहेको रकमले मार्मोलाखाङ्ग (भूटानी गुम्बा - स्वयम्भू) मर्मत गरिएको थियो।^{१५} वि.सं. १९७२ चैत्र बढी ३० (१९१५ ई.)मा स्वयम्भू जिर्णोद्धारार्थ चन्दा संकलन गर्ने विषयमा भोटु पाङ्गले भूटानलाई लेखेको पत्रको जवाफमा तत्कालिन राजा उगेन वाङ्चुकले आफ्नो तर्कबाट ४०,०००/- मा. रु. र देशवासी तर्फबाट नगद र जिन्सी गरी ४५,०००/- मा.रु. गरी जम्मा ८५,०००/- मा.रु. बराबरको चन्दा प्रदान गरेको थिए। साथै नेपालका लागि भूटानी धार्मिक प्रतिनिधि सेरावदोर्जेले यस जिर्णोद्धार कार्यको पूर्णतया रेखदेख गरेको थियो (शाक्य, ने.सं. १०९८:३१७-३१८)।

नेपाल स्थित भूटानी गुम्बाहरूको सम्पत्ति भनी वा नेपाल भूटान सांस्कृतिक सम्पदाको संरक्षणार्थ नेपाल एवं भूटान सरकार सदा तत्पर रहेको कुरा श्री ३ महाराजबाट वि.सं. १९७९ फागुण बढि ३० रोज ५ मा (सन् १९२२ ई.) देवाधर्मालाई पठाएको भूटानी धार्मिक प्रतिनिधि पूजारीको अदलिबदलिको पत्रबाट पुष्टि हुन्छ।^{१६} साथै नेपाल स्थित सम्पदाको संरक्षण र सम्बर्धन गर्न भूटानी प्रतिनिधि मात्र नभई सरकार स्वयम पनि आफूलाई जिम्मेवार सम्झेर काम गर्दथ्यो र आफूले मात्र असमर्थ भएमा नेपाली जनता एवं सरकारसँग आपसी समझदारी एवं चन्दा मागी काम चलाउने गर्दथ्यो भन्ने कुरा देवाधर्मा राजाले सिम्बुका लामालाई वि.सं. १९४० मा लेखेको पत्रबाट प्रष्ट हुन्छ।^{१७} यस्तो कृयाकलाप हालसम्म यथावत जारी रहेका छन्। यसरी सम्मुच्च रूपमा हेर्ने हो भने दुई देश बीच धार्मिक एवं सांस्कृतिक सम्बन्धलाई कायम राख्न मात्र नभई यसको सम्बर्धन र संरक्षण गर्न

दुबैले आ-आफ्नो दृष्टिबाट प्रशासनिक एवं आर्थिक क्रियाकलाप बढाउन एक आपसमा सहयोग आदान प्रदान गर्दै आएको पाइन्छ। यसरी आपसमा अप्रत्यक्ष आर्थिक सम्बन्धको विकास हुँदै गयो।

३. व्यापारिक सम्बन्ध

औपचारिक सम्झौताले तय नगरिएको भए तापनि नेपाल र भूटान बीच प्राचीन कालदेखिनै व्यापारिक सम्बन्ध कायम रही आएको कुरा कतिपय इतिहासकारहरूले उल्लेख गरेको पाइन्छ। हिरण्यलाल श्रेष्ठको (१९७४:५) भनाई अनुसार नेपालको कोशी र मेची अञ्चलका जनताहरूले प्राचीन कालदेखिनै भूटानमा व्यापारिक प्रभुता जमाएका थिए। नेपालले भूटानमा निर्यात गर्ने वस्तुहरू खासगरी भाडाकुडा, औजार, मूतिकला र अन्य कलाकृतिहरू हुन्। इतिहासकार स्टीलर (१९७५:१९३) र जवाली (२०३३:८८)का अनुसार भादगाउँका अन्तिम मल्ल राजा रणजीत मल्लले आफ्नो छोटो टक भोटका साथै भूटानमा पनि प्रचलनमा ल्याएका थिए। यसरी आफ्नो टकको प्रसारद्वारा नेपालका मल्ल शासकहरूले भूटानसँग पनि आर्थिक सम्बन्ध राखेको प्रमाणित हुन्छ। आर्थिक इतिहासका ज्ञाता डा. रेग्मी (१९७८:२०) का अनुसार नेपाल र भूटान बीच अप्रत्यक्ष व्यापारिक सम्बन्ध कायम रहेको थियो पाल्पाको प्रसिद्ध व्यापारिक केन्द्र बुटलमा उत्तरी क्षेत्रका उत्पादनहरू नून र मैनका साथै कांस, सून र तामा जस्ता धातुबाट निर्मित सामाग्रहरू भूटान, तिब्बत र भारतका महाजनहरूले सुती कपडासँग सटही (वस्तु विनिमय)द्वारा व्यापार गरिन्थ्यो। कोलीस्टर (१९८७:४८)ले उल्लेख गरे अनुसार भूटानका व्यापारीहरूले ओखर, कस्तुरी, चमर, सुन्तला, पहेलो रंग, ओइने कम्मल आदि आफ्ना उत्पादनहरू रंगपुरमा बेच्ने गर्थे। त्यसबाट प्राप्त रकमबाट उनीहरू मोटो सुती कपडा, ल्वाङ्ग, नीलम, श्रीखण्डको काठ आदि सामानहरू भारतबाट ल्याई नेपाल र आसाममा व्यापार गर्दथे। यसरी नेपाल र भूटान बीच आधिकारिक रूपमा कुनै व्यापारिक सम्बन्ध नभए तापनि अप्रत्यक्ष रूपमा जन स्तरमा यस्तो व्यापार चल्दै थियो भन्ने कुरा स्पष्ट रूपले थाहा हुन्छ। हसरत (१९८०:१६४)ले उल्लेख गरे अनुसार सन् १७१४ ई.मा नेपाल र भूटान बीच करीव ८,००,०००/- ने.रु. पर्ने सामानहरूको व्यापार भएको थियो। तर उक्त लेखकले यस भनाईलाई प्रमाणित गर्ने कुनै ठोस आधार प्रस्तुत गर्न सकेका छैनन्। भूटानले आसाम, बंगाल, सिक्किम र तिब्बतसँग व्यापार गर्ने विषयहरूको स्पष्ट उल्लेख गरिएको छ तर नेपालसँगको व्यापारका यस्ता वस्तुहरूको कतै उल्लेख भएको छैन। साथै उनले उल्लेख गरेको पुस्तकको त्यसै पृष्ठमा भूटानको समग्र भारतसँगको व्यापार देखाउने तालिकाले उक्त व्यापारलाई नेपालसँगका व्यापारभन्दा पनि तीनगुणा कम देखाएको छ। जबकि प्रारम्भदेखि हालसम्म पनि भूटानको व्यापार सम्बन्ध नेपालसँगभन्दा भारत र तिब्बतसँग बढि रहँदै आएको यथार्थ हाम्रो सामु छँदैछ। यसकारण हसरतको उक्त तालिकालाई अन्य प्रमाणहरूले सही नठहर्नेसम्म सत्य र तथ्य मान्न सकिँदैन।

यसरी अप्रत्यक्ष रूपमै भएपनि भूटान संग कायम रहंदै आएको नेपालको व्यापारिक सम्बन्ध भारतमा अंग्रेजहरूको प्रवेश भएपछि मत्थर हुन गयो। ब्रिटिश सरकारद्वारा १७५७ ई.मा भारतमा इस्ट इन्डिया कम्पनी स्थापना गरेपछि उक्त कम्पनीले नै हिमाली भेकमा आफ्नो व्यापारको विस्तार शुरू गर्‍यो। यसका लागि नेपाल र भूटानबाट आवश्यक पारवहन सुविधा प्राप्त गर्न भनी नेपाल र भूटानमा विभिन्न मिशनहरू पठाई बेग्ला बेग्लै व्यापारिक एवं राजनैतिक सम्झौताहरू गरिए। यी सम्झौताहरूबाट अंग्रेजहरूले यी हिमाली क्षेत्रहरूमा व्यापारिक सुविधा प्राप्त गर्नुको साथै आफ्नो व्यापारको समेत विस्तार गर्न सफल भए। परिणामतः परम्परादेखि चल्दै आएको नेपाल भूटान व्यापारमा प्रतिकूल असर पर्न गाई व्यापार सम्बन्ध टुट्न गयो र त्यसको साटो भारतस्थित अंग्रेजहरूको व्यापार फस्टाउन थाल्यो।

यसरी वाणिज्य र व्यापारको अन्त भएपछि राणाकालमा (सन् १८४६-१९५० ई.) नेपाल र भूटानका शासकहरू बीच एक अर्काको राज्यमा उत्पादित एवं प्राप्य वस्तुहरू एक आपसमा उपहारको रूपमा आदान प्रदान गर्दै रहेका प्रमाणहरू पाइएका छन्।^{१८} उक्त उपहार भेटीका रूपमा आदान प्रदान हुने गरेका वस्तुहरू यस प्रकारका छन्:- नेपालबाट तिन खाप १ देखि १५ थान सम्म^{१९}, थानका थान तास^{२०} खुकुरी इत्यादि^{२१} भूटानबाट नेपालमा आउने गरेका उपहारमा टोपी, च्यापसा, चाँदीले मोरेका र रत्न जडिएका कलात्मक वस्तुहरू प्रमुख थिए^{२२} साथै एक अर्काको मुलुकमा पाइने कुनै सामानको चाहना भएमा खुलस्त रूपमालेख्नु र निश्चिन्त भई माग गर्नु भनी^{२३} लेखिनु एवं थानका थान तिनखाप, तास लगायत अन्य थुप्रै सरसामान उपहार स्वरूप पठाई एक अर्काको चाहना पुरा गरेको देखिन्छ। साथै सन् १८८३-८४ ई.मा भोटसँग हुन थालेको युद्धको तयारीका लागि नेपालले भूटानबाट गधा र घोडाहरू माँग गरेको थियो (मानन्धर, २०४९:३५)। हुनत यी कृयाकलापहरूले कुनै वाणिज्य व्यापार सम्बन्ध रहेको नदेखाएता पनि एक अर्काको आवश्यकता पूर्तिको लागि वस्तु विनिमयको क्रम उपहारका रूपमा आपसी सहयोग जारी रहेका मान्न सकिन्छ।

यसरी नेपाल र भूटान बीच राजनैतिक घरातलबाट तय नगरिए तापनि विविध कारणबश स्वतह आर्थिक कृयाकलाप कायम रहेका थिए। यसकारण ऐतिहासिक घटनाक्रमको आधारमा केलाउनु पर्ने यस्तो आर्थिक सम्बन्धलाई अप्रत्यक्ष र अनौपचारिक तर आपसी सद्भावना, समझदारी र सहयोगको भावनाले ओतप्रोत परम्परागत सम्बन्ध मान्न सकिन्छ।

नोट

१. (क) धनवज्र बज्राचार्य र कमलप्रकाश मल्लद्वारा संपादित गोपालराज बंशावली (अंग्रेजी) पृ ७७.

- (ख) दिनेशराज पन्तद्वारा लिखित गोरखाको इतिहास भाग २, (नेपाली), पृ. ५३७-५३८।
- (ग) देवीप्रसाद भण्डारी गौतमबज्र र अन्यद्वारा संपादित श्री ५ पृथ्वीनारायण शाहको उपदेश भाग ४ (नेपाली) पृ. ९२१-९२२।
- (घ) विरातनगरबाट प्रकाशित साप्ताहिक पत्र हिमालचुली, १९८३ ई. जुन २२, १६८७ ई. जनवरी १८ र फेब्रुअरी ८।
- (ङ) जी.एन. मेहराद्वारा लिखित भुटानः लाण्ड अफ द पीसफूल ड्रागन (अंग्रेज), पृ. ४९।
- (च) सूर्य विक्रम ज्ञवालीद्वारा लिखित पृथ्वीनारायण शाह, (नेपाली) पृ. ४१।
- (छ) लेखिकाको व्यक्तिगत संकलनमा रहेका भिदे जी सिथद्वारा अनुवादित "समरीज अफ सेभरल भूटानीज सोर्सेज अन द रिलेशन बिटुइन नेपाल एण्ड भूटान" भन्ने अप्रकाशित कृतिको फोटो कपी।
- (ज) थिम्पु (भूटान)को राष्ट्रिय पुस्तकालयमा सुरक्षित अप्रकाशित अभिलेख (ठ्यासफू)। तिब्बति लिपि र छोकी भाषामा रहेको सो अभिलेख सोही पुस्तकालयका निर्देशक पद्म लामाज्यूको सहयोगबाट प्रयोग गरि यस लेखमा उल्लेख गरिएको छ। माथि उल्लेख गरिएको स्मिथको अप्रकाशित कृति (अनुवाद) यही ठ्यासफूका अनुवाद हुने अनुभव गर्न सकिन्छ। कारण दुबैको विषयवस्तु समान छन्।
२. (क) माथि १ (छ) मा उल्लिखित स्रोत।
 (ख) माथि १ (ज) मा उल्लिखित स्रोत।
 (ग) दिनेशराज पन्त, पूर्व उल्लिखित, पृ. ५३७-५३८।
 (घ) देवी प्रसाद भण्डारी र अन्य, पूर्व उल्लिखित पृ. ९२१-२२।
३. (क) माथि १. (छ) मा उल्लिखित स्रोत।
 (ख) माथि १. (ज) मा उल्लिखित स्रोत।
४. भिदे जी. स्मिथद्वारा अनुवादित 'दोकुमेण्टस हेल्ड बाई सानकाई गुरु जुः हेड अफ बन अफ द फोर सवलाइनयज (कव) अफ द स्वयम्भू वादाचार्य लाइनयज (फुकी) दात दील विथ रिलेशनस बिटुइन स्वयम्भू एण्ड द धर्माकालामा' शीर्षक अन्तरगतको २० वटा अभिलेखहरू मध्येको पहिलो अभिलेख।
५. ऐ
६. माथि १ (छ) मा उल्लिखित स्रोत।
७. (क) ऐ.
 (ख) माथि १ (ज) मा उल्लिखित स्रोत।
८. ऐ
९. माथि १ (छ) मा उल्लिखित स्रोत।
१०. माथि ४ मा उल्लिखित स्रोतको अभिलेख नं. ३।

११. ऐ. अभिलेख नं. ५
१२. ऐ. अभिलेख नं. २
१३. ऐ. अभिलेख नं. ७
१४. ऐ. अभिलेख नं. ८
१५. ऐ. अभिलेख नं. ७
१६. परराष्ट्र मन्त्रालय (काठमाडौं) जैशीकोठा, स्वयम्भू पोकामा रहेका "सम्बत १९७९ साल मिति फागुन बढी ३० रोज ५ को" अप्रकाशित अभिलेख।
१७. परराष्ट्र मन्त्रालय (काठमाडौं), जैशीकोठा, स्वयम्भू पोकामा रहेको "सम्बत १९४०मा श्री सिम्बूको लामालाई देवाधर्मा राजाले गरिदिएको सनदको उतार-"
१८. परराष्ट्र मन्त्रालय (काठमाडौं), जैशीकोठा, स्वयम्भू पोकामा सुरक्षित रहेको अप्रकाशित पत्रहरू:-
 - (क) ७५ साल बैसाख २० गते ५ रोजमा नेपालबाट पठाएको पत्र
 - (ख) ७५ साल वैसाख गते २१, रोज ६ का भूटानको भरपाई।
 - (ग) सम्बत १९८८ साल मिति फागुन बढी ३० रोज ६मा श्री ३ महाराजबाट देवाधर्माका राजाको नाममा लेखिपठाको पत्र।
 - (घ) श्री ३ का हजुरमा देवाधर्माका राजाले चढाई पठाएको भोटे चिठीको उतार, भोटे छुटेका सालको ११ महीनाको बढीया मिति।
 - (ङ) सम्बत १९७९ साल मिति फागुन बढी ३० रोज ५ मा श्री ३ महाराजबाट देवाधर्माका राजा उर्गेनलाई लेखेको पत्र।
१९. माथि १८ (क), (ख) र (ङ) मा उल्लिखित स्रोतहरू।
२०. माथि १८ (ग) मा उल्लिखित अभिलेख।
२१. माथि १८ (ग) र (ङ) मा उल्लिखित स्रोतहरू।
२२. माथि १८ (घ) र (ग) मा उल्लिखित स्रोतहरू।
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RESEARCH NOTE

MASS MOVEMENT 1990

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The late 1980s and the early 1990 will long be remembered as "the time of great upheavals" in the history of democracy and human rights. Mikhail Gorbachev's "New Thinking" *Perestroika* (restructuring) and *Glasnost* (openness) has changed Soviet life and has also worked as a catalyst in transforming the communist world. In Eastern Europe i.e. Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia, decades-old orthodox communist regimes were replaced by multi-party system (MPS) after the "Velvet Revolution"- a remarkably gentle overthrow of communism. Similarly, the Soviet Union, the fatherland of communism and Mongolia, the first Asian communist country, have changed their political system from the totalitarian rule of the communist party to multi-party democracy. Only Ceausescu in Romania was toppled by a bloody revolution.

In the broad sweep of the revolution for democracy all over the world, not only the so-called dictatorships of the proletariat were defeated, many dictators, the high profile generals or civilians or monarchs were also eliminated from Asia, Africa and Latin America. Latin America- the erstwhile paradise of dictators- has been greatly affected by the global wave of democratic movement. But for Noriega of Panama who was toppled by the US army, the rule of the generals in Colombia, Chile, Brazil and Nicaragua was peacefully replaced by civilian governments. The fall of "Green" dictators from Latin America and "Red" from Eastern Europe encouraged the struggle for democracy in Black Africa. Consequently, multi-party democracy made inroads into Algeria, Benin, Gabon, Ivory-Coast, Zaire etc. In the mid-80s, movements for the restoration of democracy in Asia picked strong momentum. Through popular movements, two civilians dictators, Marcos of the Philippines and Chun Doe Hwan of South Korea were ousted from power in 1986 and 1988 respectively. Though the military holds democracy in Burma bottled up a popular uprising in mid-1988 led to the end of the 26 year old absolute rule of Ne Win. And the death of Zia-ul-Haq in a mysterious air crash on 17 August, 1988 resulted in the revival of the multi-

party system in Pakistan. The "winds of change" sweeping the world also touched the Himalayan Kingdom of Nepal where the politicized section of society, at large, had been long discontented with the authoritarian partyless panchayat system (PS).

With two explicit demands: establishment of the MPS and formation of an interim government, the banned Nepali Congress (NC) and the United Left Front (ULF)¹ launched a joint mass movement from February 18, 1990. Within days the popular agitation gathered pace turning the Kingdom into "the land of turbulence". The panchas were obviously determined to face this challenge to the system. But there was a lack of coherent approach among them in tackling the problem. One section favoured the government's stand that the movement should be forcibly suppressed while others urged the search for a "political solution". The palace was in a dilemma over which approach to adopt but it avoided the latter option as long as possible. In its effort to diffuse the crisis, the panchayat regime came up with a three-pronged strategy that at times seemed self-contradictory. First, it tried to delegitimize the movement by invoking nationalism in the usual way of India bashing. Second, officially HMG tried its best to give the impression of an increasing rapprochement with Delhi, and at the same time, it was equally careful to seek ways of reducing external support for the movement. Third, coercive measures were taken to counter the opposition campaign.

Since the NC had sounded the call battle at its January conference, the panchas also mounted a counter-propaganda war, organizing pancha rallies in different parts of the country. They reiterated the viability of the "active leadership" of the King and "Partyless" character of the system equating them with the notions of nation and nationalism. The MPS was defamed as an "alien idea". The call for the restoration of democracy and the subsequent popular demonstrations were labelled as anti-social, anti-national, anti-constitutional and destructive/subversive/ hooliganism. The propaganda machinery largely succeeded in gathering paid yokels to demonstrate public support for the PS. But observers regarded such frantic and loud posturings of the panchas as ridiculous.

Another dimension of panchayat nationalism was buttressed by anti-Indianism. Though the panchas were conspicuously divided on the means to be adopted to resolve the country's political crisis, all of them suspected India's hand, seen or unseen, in the internal developments in Nepalese politics. As it was said by Ganesh Raj Sharma, a member of the PS think-tank, "This movement is inspired and encouraged by India with the aim of creating a chaotic and anarchic situation in Nepal to make it soften its stand."² In the hope of diverting the people's attention or alienating the masses from the opposition movement the establishment sought to weaken

and defuse crisis by playing on anti-Indian sentiments arising from the prevailing prolonged deadlock in trade relations with India. The PS propaganda described the opposition movement as the handiwork of a handful of ill-advised elements with foreign backing that harmed independence, sovereignty, nationalism and national unity.³ But the earlier exposure of the secret 1965 agreement between the then panchayat government and India was adequate enough to show the hollowness of the panchayat nationalism.

examining the maneuvers of the panchayat government, it should be pointed out that till the first few days of the movement, the panchas openly charged that the movement was launched by a handful of illegal NC "riding on the back of foreigners". The intention behind this ploy was obvious. The panchayat regime still hoped to manipulate the line of convergence between the panchas and communists in regard to India with the aim of disrupting the remarkable unity between the NC and the ULF. There was, in the background, a common tendency between the PS and the left parties to regard anti-Indianism as a part of Nepalese nationalism. The regime, therefore, forcefully tried to make a major issue of the address by Indian leaders at the NC conference, deploring their participation as "a naked intervention in Nepalese affairs." But contrary to the expectations of the panchas, all the left leaders were highly appreciative of the articulated support of Indian leaders to the aims and objectives of the opposition movement being launched in Nepal. The panchayat regime once again changed the way it tried to portray the opposition movement. From a week after the agitation was formally launched, HMG began alleging that it was the work of communist extremists. This line was taken in order to discourage external support to the democratic movement in Nepal but the opposition regarded it as a new trick to sabotage the movement. Opposition leaders, - though under house arrest or having gone underground- remained in close contact with the national and international media. They, therefore, individually and jointly, warned the people to be aware of this new move of the regime that it was a "conspiracy and mischievous device directed to disrupt unity between the NC and the ULF and also to spread false notions."⁴ Ultimately the tactics applied to weaken the unity between the Congress and the Communists proved futile.

As has already been noted, the panchayat regime pursued a policy along two mutually contradictory lines in regard to India's role in the anti-panchayat struggle in Nepal. To alienate the people from the movement and to divide the NC and the ULF, it tried to depict the opposition movement as backed by India. At the same time, in order to discourage the movement, it gave high coverage and exaggerated emphasis to the non-interference approach of the Delhi government. Additionally family relationships between certain section of the elites in Nepal and India, together with the religious leverage

which Nepal's status as a Hindu Kingdom commanded in India were manipulated behind the scenes lobbying in the south of the border. Moreover, HMG developed an understanding with the V.P. Singh government in regard to the impasse in Nepal-India relations with a commitment that Nepal would wholeheartedly respect India's sensitivities in the future. Two-round of talks were held in Delhi and Kathmandu between the government of India and Nepal at the time when the Nepalese people were coming out on the streets against the PS. But the rapprochement at the governmental level between Nepal and India did not have much effect on the democratic movement in Nepal.

The ruling elites were equally sensitive to the western support for the opposition movement. In addition to lobbying and maneuvering behind the scenes, they attempted to diffuse external pressure in various ways. First, the PS was claimed to be a democratic system. The verdict of the referendum held on 1980 and two general elections were specifically mentioned in the reply letter by 13 members of the National Panchayat (NP) to the US senators who had written in protest against the government's actions. Next, they played the 'communist card' alleging that the movement was fully controlled by communist extremists, in the hope of exploiting the anti-communist sentiments in the west. Perhaps this was one of the major reasons why the US pressured the King and the Congress to resolve the problem through a compromise by enlarging the scope for democratization within the system. Accordingly King Birendra, in his address at a pancha rally in Pokhara on march 16, 1990, publicly announced a proposal to introduce reforms in the existing panchayat system. This announcement however should not be viewed exclusively as a response to external pressure. However, in the absense of any follow-up action after the announcement it was believed that the proposition of reformation had mostly been put up to satisfy the western world.

"We'll eliminate them", said Kamal Thapa, Minister of Communication, in reference to the opposition. This statement not only manifested individual dogmatism, but was also indicative of the government's strategy to counter the movement. Within the first three days of the movement, a dozen freedom fighters lost their lives in Bharatpur, Bhaktapur and Janakpur. Thousands of people both party activists and commoners were put in detention under very inhuman conditions. The opposition demonstrations augmented especially by unemployed youths and campus students against the government's suppression had given a real spark to the popular agitation. A foreign observer after watching the first few days of the movement concluded, "Nepal, one of the world's truly beautiful places, is fast becoming a land of the midnight knock."⁵ As the movement gained

momentum and spread far and wide, the panchayat regime's repressive measures also became harsher and more brutal. Consequently, many people were shot and thousands were put behind bars. But from the very beginning, there was every likelihood of a backlash against the government's suppressive policy. The brutal suppression by the government aroused indignation among the people and also aroused concern in the international community.

The loss of lives of unarmed demonstrators provided an additional reason for the early involvement of different professional groups in the movement. The people from different walks of life especially doctors and lawyers took to the streets to fight against the PS. A small section of teachers and lecturers, engineers and overseers, and artists and writers also got actively involved in the movement later. However, in consideration of the slackening of the momentum after its first stage, the opposition followed another way to bring the people to the streets. Rumours, like the offices of the provision Fund and Banks were going bankrupt due to massive drawing out the funds by the government succeeded in raising the ire of the employees of public enterprises. Moreover, superb examples of courage were demonstrated by school-going boys and girls against the PS in interval between the second and third stages of the movement. The movement, then onwards, rapidly gained a revolutionary character that never flagged. In the third phase that began from March 24, the movement assumed a new shape: a true people's movement. Day after day, the crowds of the people chanting "democracy and human rights" multiplied within and outside Kathmandu valley. In reaction to the firing in Patan and Kirtipur where six persons were shot on the spot, the people from each household in these cities including even housewives and children took to regular marching on the streets brandishing various kitchen utensils and agriculture tools. In the final phase corporation staffs and civil servants also took part in the struggle against the PS.

Since the movement was moving towards revolutionary resolution in terms of popular participation and the style of the agitation, King Birendra was compelled to realize the limitations of his options and the possible repercussions for the institution of monarchy if the policy of suppression was further intensified. Even weeks before the movement began, G.M. Singh, had rebuked the palace for its role as protector of the PS. The king's active patronage of the PS had become a focal point of public criticism throughout the movement. In every corner of the city, there were cartoons and wall-paintings showing popular resentment against the palace. A foreign newspaper reporter also commented, "There are ... striking similarities in the lead up to the recent eruption against the authoritarian rule of the King of Nepal and the revolution in Iran in which the Shah became the prime

target.”⁶ In fact the anger against the palace grew spontaneously in proportion to the repression employed by the government. But for the NC, hitting the palace was only a strategy to pressurize the King for early resolution of the problem in favour of the objectives of the movement for the restoration of democracy. In its conference on January 18-20, where the date for the movement was announced, NC's supreme leader Ganesh Man Singh had clearly stated, “Abolition of the monarchy is tantamount to the end of democracy in Nepal.”⁷ While forming the ULF on the eve of the movement, the involved left parties also had tacitly accepted the retention of the King.⁸ But ideologically they are virtually pro-republican. Therefore, the institution of monarchy might have been jeopardised had the movement intensified to such an extent that the NC could no longer command the movement.

Perhaps, realizing the imminent danger, suddenly the palace changed its hard line into a conciliatory overture to stall the movement. In the early morning of April 6, King Birendra unexpectedly announced his decision to form a Constitution Reform Committee and an Inquiry Committee. By the same proclamation, he made the Marich Man cabinet the scapegoat for the turmoil in the country and replaced him by a former loyal PM Lokendra Bahadur Chand as the new PM. The king also added that the new ministry would consult people holding different political views.

In fact most of the former PMs and chairmen of the National Panchayat and many rank-and-file panchas had been repeatedly urging an early resolution of the political crisis in the country. A statement in the name of 40 members of the NP, three of whom disowned it later, demanded a political solution for the political crisis. There was a constant flow of statements, individual or collective, and all requested king Birendra to pursue a dialogue with the opposition to resolve the problem. Even earlier former PM Surya Bahadur Thapa had declared some months before the opposition movement was formally launched, that “the day could prove very bad for the rulers if the system failed to acknowledge the existence of the opposition and to encompass their aspirations.”⁹ But the reshuffle of the cabinet on April 1, a council of ministers comprising hardliners, manifested the usual mood of the palace even at eleventh hour of the movement. When all the cards played to suppress the popular struggle failed and were as a matter of fact backfiring, the palace was compelled to initiate an alternative strategy, the reconciliatory approach, which was indeed the last straw for the PS.

However, it came too late. The hard repressive measures followed by HMG to deal with the movement had already brought home irrelevance of reformation to the people. Consequently, the orchestration of events reached a climax on April 6, the day of final confrontation for both the pro and the anti-PS groups. This was the day the King announced possible reformation in the

panchayat framework, but hundreds of thousands of people in different parts of the Kingdom spontaneously poured out into the streets to express their indignation over the inadequacy of the king's step. The regime in a last of desperation ordered the army units, which had been ordered to fire on the unarmed crowd and consequently eleven people in Butwal lost their lives. On the "Black Friday" the king's regime bared its fangs in Kathmandu resulting in a street massacre on the Durbar Marg around the statue of the late King Mahendra, the architect of the PS. The loss of scores of lives of people on this day proved too costly in the sense that it marked a turning point in the struggle; from this point onwards the people's expectations overtook the limited objectives of the movement, jointly set forth by the NC and the ULF.

The political parties and their leaders also rejected the palace's proposals. G.M. Singh angrily denounced it stating that it was a mischievous attempt to dent the democratic aspirations of the people sweeping over the country. The ULF also issued a statement appealing to the people to continue the movement peacefully. Repeatedly throughout the movement, party leaders individually or jointly had forthrightly made clear that the struggle against the PS would continue till the objectives of the movement would be fulfilled. On the night of April 8 after talks between the king and party leaders, the four leaders K.P. Bhattarai and G.P. Koirala of the NC and Mrs. Sahana Pradhan and Radha Krishna Mainali of the ULF called off the movement following compromise with the palace that 'partylessness' would be deleted from the constitution and the lifting of the ban on political parties.

Forces of the Movement

When the ban on political parties was lifted and partylessness was promised to delete from the constitution on April 8, 1990 by a notification of the press secretariat of the King, the *desire of the Nepalese people* and *international environment* were explicit in the notification. The opposition leaders had already expressed optimism regarding the changing internal and external scenario and their impact on the democratic movement in Nepal. G.M. Singh during his nationwide campaign for the preparation of the movement had stated that, "the national and international situations have never been as favorable to the cause of democracy as now"¹⁰

Political Conflicts

The conflict between the palace and the parties had begun soon after the success of 1950-51 revolution. The revolution had ended the century long autocratic Rana rule and achieved a political system based assuredly on constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy. But the achievement of the revolution had gradually become diluted because of the King's refusal to confine his role to that of a formal head of state. The weakened and fragmented political parties gave their consent to King Mahendra's decision not to go for Constituent Assembly election promised earlier by his father King Tribhuvan. Instead, King Mahendra himself granted a constitution in 1959. However, under the NC government, which had secured a two thirds majority in the elections to the parliament in 1959, the King's role had once again been reduced perhaps not in substance but in form to that of a nominal head of state. It was but unpalatable to the assertive and ambitious King Mahendra. Ultimately even before the expiry of two years he abruptly ended the experiment with parliamentary democracy by a royal coup on December 16, 1960.

The hijacking of democracy had led the NC to launch a mild violent movement. But King Mahendra successfully tackled the challenge. He devised the PS as the infrastructure to perpetrate his absolute rule. At the time of initiation of the PS, it was said that the arrangement was "experimental". But later, by the first amendment to the Constitution of Nepal, the PS was declared "partyless" and a system to which there was no alternative. King Birendra moved a step further to make the PS more rigid. By the second amendment to constitution, the Back to Village National Campaign was made extremely powerful in all respects: from recruitment to retirement of the rank and file of panchas. The PS, then onwards began to function as a totalitarian one party system gradually eliminating the room for systemic opposition. The role of the banned political parties became very unpredictable. The NC, which had launched an arm insurgency against the PS in the early 1960's, had offered 'cooperation' to the King and declared its faith in the leadership of the King by a statement of Subarna Shamsher in 1968. But B.P. Koirala after his release renewed the line of confrontation with the unequivocal statement that "an armed revolution is only the way to topple the PS and thereby restore democracy."¹¹ A section of young communists who were inspired by the cultural revolution in China and the Naxlite movement in India also followed the path of violence in the name of liquidation of the class enemy. The violent movements, whether launched by the NC or the communists, had been suppressed. Ultimately B.P. Koirala and his colleagues returned to Nepal from exile in India in 1975 with a "national reconciliation" policy, arguing that the NC had a twofold responsibility of

safeguarding democracy and nationalism. The oppositions however were divided. The communists had equated the panchas and the Congress as two parts of a coin. While the NC also frequently used the communist card as a bargaining chip with the King, Subarna's "cooperation" and B.P.'s reconciliation policies had this stance in the background. The PS placidly continued with the divide and rule policy. But when the students, with democratic and left affiliations had jointly launched an agitation against the PS, King Birendra was compelled to announce a referendum on May 24, 1979, the choice being between two alternatives: reformed panchayat or the multi-party system. The verdict of the referendum went in favour of the PS by a margin of 10 percent, securing 54.7 percent against the MPS' 45.3 percent.

The verdict of the referendum gave the stamp of popular legitimacy to the PS. While appealing to all sections of the Nepali people to join the "single national main-stream", King Birendra promised to give due respect to the minority. Indeed, the third amendment to the constitution incorporated some features of the parliamentary system i.e. direct elections to the national legislature, election of the PM by the legislature and responsibility of the cabinet to the legislature. But paradoxically the referendum had sharpened and intensified political conflict in the country. B.P. Koirala had visualised:

"The Panchayat System is breathing its last. It will come to the end of its life because of the following three contradictions. The first contradiction will manifest itself in National Panchayat in the form of personal differences which will come to the fore given the lack of party discipline or because of the lack of concrete principle and a strong centre The second contradiction will rise from the conflict between the palace and the National Panchayat. Prior to the referendum, if nothing else, there was a strict command of leadership. This is no longer possible. The third contradiction will rise from two-decade long conflict between the admirers of the Panchayat system and the democrats, outside the system. This conflict will intensify further."¹²

Though there was ideological division between hardliner and liberal panchas, factionalism among them, from top to bottom, was merely based on the politics of one-upmanship and the politics of aggrandizement. There was a tendency of polarization among panchas as between "official" candidates and "non-official" candidates. The frustrations and anger generated by the elections would seemingly come to the fore from the very beginning of the NP session. Many members of the NP frequently shifted their loyalty from one group to another, apparently motivated by the aspirations for post, power, privilege and easy money. By the time of the dramatic removal of the

first ever elected panchayat government headed by S.B. Thapa, the house had become permanently divided between pro- and anti-government factions. Moreover, no-confidence motion became a major obsession of the legislators.

From another perspective, the conflict and conspiracy among the ruling elites was a by-product of a bundle of controversies and contradictions within the system. The third amendment had produced an odd mix of authoritarian tendencies and democratic procedures. Adult franchise and cabinet responsible to the legislator could, with good faith, be used to produce popular leadership, to foster competitive politics and to the evolution of an organized opposition. But all these contravened the active leadership of the King and partyless character of the system. The palace was well aware of the cost it would have to bear if the potential for democratization was permitted to develop fully. The palace was, therefore, sometimes overtly and generally covertly involved in efforts to sabotage the spirit of adult franchise and responsible government. The unopposed election to the posts of PM and Chairman of NP, the unprecedented removal of the government of S.B. Thapa and the rejection of a no-confidence motion against Lokendra Bahadur Chand even after it had been officially tabled at the house, were all examples of the behind-the-scene manipulations of the palace. In such circumstances an invisible centre of power, popularly known as the "underground gang" (patronised by the palace) emerged as a critical political factor. It was obvious that this gang monopolised court politics, amassed commissions and tenders, ran big business houses, indulged in large-scale smuggling etc. The more the gang's grip tightened, the more certain their final destruction became. B.P. Koirala rightly observed that the referendum had made the panchas like cannibals. Prof. Baral also advanced a general argument that, "In traditional régimes, intra-elite conflict plays a significant role in destroying the system."¹³ The internal discord among the ruling elites contributed a lot to weakening the PS.

The conflict between the admirers of the partyless PS and its opponents had been intensified by post-referendum politics. Except B.P. Koirala who accepted the result of the referendum however *unexpected* and *inexplicable*¹⁴, many of his party followers and most of the communist leaders rejected the verdict as "manipulated and rigged". Consequently all political parties, except Rohit and Rayamajhi groups of the left and the 'Group of 38' of democrats, boycotted the first general elections under the PS held after the referendum. But none of them could provide an effective way out of the political impasse. The Satyagraha launched by the NC in 1985 drove home a lesson that prospects of extra systemic opposition was not bright at that time. In fact the incorporation of the idea of popular participation and responsible government by the PS after the third amendment widened the

scope for systemic opposition. By the time of the second general elections, many communist factions including the ML and the Fourth Convention had made changes in their policies deciding to abandon the non-effective strategy of boycott with the view that "the struggle against the PS could be intensified within the system".¹⁵ However there were many restrictive provisions¹⁶ in the constitution that obstructed the participation of political parties with dignity. In consideration of such constitutional bars, the NC laid down some preconditions¹⁷ for their participation in the elections. But the palace discouraged all possibilities of systemic opposition. That was why the NC had to face a humiliating defeat when it took part in local elections without fulfilment of its preconditions. After the result of local elections, G.M. Singh declared, "The NC will not participate in any panchayat elections so long as NC remains under my influence."¹⁸ The confrontation between the NC and the PS culminated on December 16, 1987 when the NC followers who had been elected in local panchayat elections, boycotted the King Mahendra Memorial and Constitution Day and subsequently HMG suspended them. On the whole, the party secretary G.P. Koirala in his address to the historic conference of the party on January 18-20, made it clear:

"In the hope of achieving a national consensus for democracy the late B.P. Koirala, till the end of his life, favoured solving the problem through dialogue with the King. Hence, the endeavour was continued by myself and finally by Ganesh Man Singh. But time showed that such meetings alone would not solve the problems of the country... (This, however, does not mean) the NC has abandoned the idea of talks and mutual understanding. But we feel that talks or dialogue is worthless unless and until substantial change comes into the politics of the country."¹⁹

Unity between the Congress and the Communist

The most important factor behind the success of the recent mass movement was unity between the NC and the U.L.F. In the early 1960s. Pushpa Lal Shrestha, the leader of the Nepal Communist Party (NCP) initiated the idea of bringing the Congress and the communists together on a single platform against the PS. The idea was revived during the referendum and thereafter by some left leaders, especially Man Mohan Adhikari worked hard for unity among the anti-establishment forces. But both the leaders mentioned were then branded as 'traitors' and the 'tail of the Congress' by the extremists and radical communists. The proposal set forth by the moderate communist leaders for unity between the Congress and the Communists was sceptically refused by the NC under the leadership of B.P. Koirala. The NC's anti-communist phobia was further aggravated because of the boycott of the

referendum by the ML and the Mashal (emerging influential leftist groups) and its consequences. On the other side, the NC's national reconciliation policy limited its options for working in harmony with the left. Because the gist of this policy as defined by B.P. Koirala and his followers, was a mix of cooperation and confrontation with the King: cooperation for nationalism but confrontation for democracy. The orientation of this policy was, by and large, towards the palace. The leftists also strongly suspected that the NC's two-track reconciliation policy amounted to virtually aligning with the King against the communists. Even Bala Ram Upadhaya a leader from the Man Mohan Group, which had better relations with the NC than any others, made this clear:

"It is our policy to seek unity with the B.P. group. At the same time, it is our policy to oppose the Nepali Congress if it pursues a line of seeking compromise with the panchayat system. This explains why we have been consistently opposing its line of national reconciliation... We want them to abandon this line and forge unity with all anti-panchayat forces for the restoration of democratic rights."²⁰

The NC's reconciliation policy remained unchanged. But, though there was some inconsistency, it moved towards confrontation rather than cooperation after the death of B.P. Koirala. G.M. Singh in his capacity as supreme leader and K.P. Bhattarai as the acting president of the party argued that B.P.'s acceptance of the result of the referendum was done in his individual capacity and was not binding to the party.²¹ Still there was divergence of perception among the top leaders of the party: G.P. Koirala was strongly in favour of 'reconciliation' with the King and participation in the panchayat elections while Ganesh Man Singh clearly saw the inevitability of the struggle with the help of the communists. During the time of interval between the death of B.P. Koirala and the recent mass movement, the party tested both options. In 1985, it had launched a Satyagraha on the basis of unity in action with five left groups.²² Later in the general elections of 1986, the NC offered its participation with certain preconditions. Ultimately it was compelled to boycott the elections since the regime did not fulfill the demands of the NC. However, the party took part in local elections in which its candidates suffered a humiliating defeat. On the whole, though the importance of the NC's reconciliation policy to liberalize the politics of the country to a certain extent could not be overlooked, the policy of national reconciliation as a medium for seeking systemic opposition was not well responded by the panchayat regime. Consequently the NC was compelled to move towards the struggle against the PS in cooperation and unity with the communist.

Besides, it was the change in strategy and perceptions among many communist splinter groups in Nepal that led to parallel efforts towards forming a joint front among themselves and also to seek unity between the NC and the left front. On account of the constant improvement in relations between the two communist giants, the USSR and China, the relevance of division along Soviet and Chinese lines narrowed down. Again, internal changes in the politics of the Soviet Union and China reduced the importance of the international communist movement which helped in shifting the orientation of the Nepalese communists towards a more nationalistic and less internationalist outlook. On the internal issues, the Nepali communists had different approaches mainly on the questions of acceptance of the Maoist ideology, participation in panchayat elections, alliance with the NC; and so forth. Still there was consensus among them of the need to struggle for multi-party system in the country. Even those who strongly advocated "new people's revolution" supported the MPS as a bourgeois pre-requisite for moving ahead on the path of socialism and communism.

The consensus among the leftists on the MPS helped to gloss over other differences. The most important issue was unity among themselves and with the NC which wished the communists to accept the MPS as a commitment not just as a strategy.²³ Man Mohan, Tulsi Lal, Manandhar and Verma groups were initiators for unity between the congress and the communists. The NCP, led by Sahana Pradhan came later, but readily into the fold. However, the Maoists, especially Mashal and ML, seemed intransigent. In course of time, Nirmal Lama of the Mashal group urged cooperation with the NC and consequently his group split with the Mashal, an extremist communist party of Nepal led by Mohan Bikram Singh. Previously, at the time of Satyagraha in 1985 two Maoist factions, led by Rohit and Nirmal Lama had showed eagerness for unity among anti-panchayat forces for an effective mass movement. The ML was also of this opinion but it was cautious and reluctant to work with the NC. This party also stayed outside the left front formed by the five communist groups at the time of Satyagraha in 1985. Still, there was an influential moderate group within the party which constantly and forcefully pleaded for alliance with the NC at least for identical interest against the PS. Besides, the multiplication of ML's activities in the post-referendum period through electoral participation in the PS, joining human rights organizations, and similar front bodies made its leaders more pragmatic and ready for democratization and liberalization in the party's outlook. By its fourth conference in August 1989, the trend towards liberalization propelled the party into dropping Maoism, abandoning the old concept of "dictatorship of the proletariat" and totalitarian one-party rule.²⁴ All these developments made it possible to

achieve a broader unity among opposition forces, notwithstanding the rhetoric of the Mashal and similar other marginal groups which opposed this step. In conformity with the pre-conceived plan to launch a joint mass movement by Congress and Communists, the ULF was formed on January 15, 1990 consisting of seven splinter groups.

The constant forward looking changes in the attitudes and behaviour of Nepali leftists has been tremendously influenced by the massive erosion of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Gorbachev's policy of openness and reform changed the old face of communism. Adopting the slogan of "socialism with human face and democracy", many communist parties in Eastern Europe renamed themselves as "Social Democrats". This new wave largely affected the way of thinking of the Nepali communists despite their strong rejection of the possibility of mechanical duplication of such international developments in the Nepalese context. Very significantly and boldly, the ML in its central committee meeting in October 1989 decided to accept the MPS as an indispensable part of the principles of the party.

The changing strategy and perspectives of the Nepali communists was widely appreciated by the NC as the leftists whole heartedly welcomed the wish of the Congress to launch a joint mass movement. G.M. Singh on the eve of the movement stated optimistically, "The present is not the age of Stalin. The World's situation has changed. There have been changes among the communists accordingly. They have understood well that socialism or communism follows democracy".²⁵ Similarly, Bal Krishna Khand, the president of the Nepal Student Union expressed the view that it would be unfair to regard Nepali communists as still within the framework of 1979-80, because they have reformed towards democratic socialism in line with the modification in communist philosophy all over the world.²⁶ The unity between the Congress and the Communists, in totality, had been formed on the ground of their identical interest against the PS and their mutual appreciation of increasing pragmatism on both sides. This augured well for the movement for democracy restoration (MRD) in the country.

Role of Middle Class

The success of the MRD in Nepal once again proved that the middle class is a change agent. Though the struggle against the PS affected rural dwellers also, it was largely a middle class urban movement. It was perhaps the first movement in Nepal in which different professionals i.e. students, lawyers, doctors, nurses, para-medicals, lecturers, teachers, corporation staffs and civil servants became openly involved. These middle class people played a prominent role in the movement making three principal contributions: giving continuity to the movement, paralysing the machinery of the regime

and motivating the rest of the population. The involvement of the middle class in recent MRD was generated mainly because of stagnation in economic development, imbalance in economic development between one sector and others, the gap between expectations and attainment, and hopelessness in regard to the future under the PS.

Nepal's economy had suffered from a prolonged state of stagnation. During 1960-85 the per capita growth rate was only 0.1 percent. The basic structure of the economy remained unchanged. Agriculture continued to contribute 60 percent of the population; the contribution of manufacturing to GDP hovered around 4 percent.²⁷ Industrial development was held back because the pattern of investment was highly concentrated in the trade sector. Worst of all, a parallel economy grew massively in the post referendum period. The trade deficit increased rapidly. Dependency on foreign aid also increased. The state of Nepal's economy, on the whole, was miserable, as the then US ambassador pointed out:

"A hard reality is that Nepal has been living beyond its means, that without major increases in external assistance, Nepal cannot even afford to operate and maintain the existing level of government-provided goods and services."²⁸

However, relatively speaking, the fields of education and communication achieved some progress during the PS, which helped the growth of the middle class. This class is highly ambitious in both political and economic areas, and also widely exposed to national and international developments. They are/were quickly affected and inspired by international trends and also equally frustrated when they compared the situation of their own country with others. "This frustrated middle class has emerged as a stronger and more dominant force than the traditional forces, and this led to bring an invisible change in the previous balance of power of Nepalese politics."²⁹ The increasing middle class naturally required enlargement in the scope of political dissent to accommodate changing aspirations. But the PS granted only licensed dissent. "This gap between the desire for change and accomplished change would create frustrated expectations about political life, which in turn could lead to riot, rebellion and revolution."³⁰

As already noted, the MRD was an urban class movement. Two grievances stand out as the main factors behind revolutionary urban tumults: the cost of food and the availability of employment.³¹ The gap between population growth and the dismal economic growth rate posed a chronic employment problem. The problem of educated employment had also steadily worsened in proportion to the growth of educated people. "The number of school leavers increasing at least four times faster than new jobs are being created."³² Besides, the living standard of the Nepalese people had declined

partly because of steep price rises and inflation. The average price rise was 10.4 percent in the five years from 1983/84. Viewing objectively, the index of price rise, in between 1986 to 1990, in food grains, the increase ranged 22 to 32 percent in rice, 33 to 84 in pulses (*mas*), 65 in milk and 31 to 35 in cooking oil.³³ In addition, the Nepali rupee was devalued twice in the aftermath of the referendum, which also caused a decline in the per capita income and purchasing power of the people. All These created hardships in the day-to-day life of the people, the most affected group being urban dwellers and the middle class. The already bad situation further deteriorated because of the prolonged deadlock in Indo-Nepal relations. The consequence of India's trade embargo on Nepal as admitted by the then Finance Minister was "The Indian economic blockade would cause of loss of goods and services worth Rs. 2000 million | during 1988-89. Revenue is likely to go down to Rs. 1000 m. and inflation which was expected to come down from 11 percent in 1987/88 to 8 percent in 1988/89 is likely to remain in two digits. The GDP which had been expected to grow by 5.3 percent is likely to grow by 1.6 percent."³⁴ Besides, HMG could not adequately supply the shortages of essential commodities and sky-rocketing prices were out of the reach of the poor Nepalese. In such troubled times, thousands of unorganized workers who were previously engaged in construction and other industries lost their jobs as these sectors immediately began feeling the consequences of the trade embargo. Prolonged hardships generated anger and frustration among the people that suddenly exploded when the NC and the ULF jointly called for a mass movement against the PS.

Favourable International Environment

The international environment was also favourable for the democratic movement in Nepal. The global relaxation in east-west tensions reduced the room for manoeuvre by the authoritarian PS. At the time of cold war in 1960s, the panchayat regime had exploited the situation of the "decline of ideology" in international relations. Both the East and the West had also granted protective support to the PS at least as a part of their global strategy to contain the influence of one against other. Gorbachev's commitment to the spirit of *glasnost* and *perestroika* and also the US's global concern for human rights and democracy encouraged the opposition in Nepal to struggle for multi-party democracy. Besides, given the increasing rapprochement between the two super powers, there was no logic for both countries to give active protective support to the panchayat rulers against the popular aspirations of the people as they had done during the period of hostility when each sought to counter the other.

Moreover, the detente in Sino-Indian relations had substantially weakened the PS's elbow room. The PS was established at the time when the relations between China and India were tense. King Mahendra had played off once against the other to sustain his regime. The statement of Chen Yi, in response to the reaction of Nehru on the royal coup of 1960 as "a set back for democracy" may be recalled here: "If any foreign force attacks Nepal, we Chinese people stand on your side." Similarly India seemed happy after the 1965 secret agreement with Nepal obviously entered into for its support to the PS. The role of China and India vis-a-vis Nepal to counter one against the other was anticipated to continue on the issue of MRD in Nepal. Hemanta Rana, one of the members of think-tank of the PS who perceived India's hand in the recent anti-panchayat struggle, expected Chinese support to the regime against the movement.³⁵ But China was surprisingly silent on the movement in Nepal. As India had adopted non-interference policy at the time of the movement, China had no basis to interfere. The indifference of neighbours even at the time of crisis to the PS manifested the decline of the manoeuvring capability of the regime.

The external strength of the PS was severely affected by its strained relation with the southern neighbour. Tensions were aroused by a number of issues i.e. the work permit system, bilateral trade and tariff, the engagement of Chinese technicians in Terai, imports of arms from China by Nepal etc. The crisis reached its culminating point on March 23, 1989 following the expiry of the trade and transit treaties, India's abrupt decision to close 13 out of 15 entry points into Nepal and its consequences led both sides to talk about the need to review the whole gamut of their bilateral relations. Nepal insisted on two different treaties on trade and transit and also asserted independent views on other issues. The prime focus of India was on the acquisition of Chinese arms by Nepal. Because it is viewed in India as the completion of the chain of China's arms transfer relationship in South Asia in addition to the arms deployed in Tibet along the Sino-India border.³⁶ But political developments both in Nepal and India brightened the hope of sorting out the problems. The government of Nepal seemed eager for early resolution of the problem as the date of the movement came nearer. The National Front government in Delhi also showed signs of change from the past coercive attitude of the Rajiv government to a conciliatory approach towards Nepal. The way of dealing had changed from irrecconcilables to friendly overtures between the governments of Nepal and India. But by then the prolonged stalemate in trade relations with India had considerably helped in preparing the Nepalese people psychologically for the MRD in Nepal.

Besides, Nepal could not remain isolated from the tidal wave of democracy and human rights sweeping all over the world. In this regard an

Indian MP, M.J. Akabar rightly observed, "The struggle for liberalization knows no boundary; the idea of democracy, the soul of freedom romps in impunity across the borders."³⁷ The sudden collapse of communist regimes in Eastern Europe largely inspired and encouraged Nepal to take similar action against the authoritarian PS. It was indeed the tragic end of 24 years "iron rule" of Ceausescu in Romania that boosted morale of the Nepalese people as an example of peoples power. Surya Bahadur Shakya, in his speech of welcome at the NC's conference, which decided to launch the movement, remarked:

"The wave of democracy is sweeping through the world. In many neighbouring countries, dictatorships are falling one by one, whether they be Marcos of the Philippines or Ceausescu of Romania. If the iron wall of Berlin has fallen into the dust of liberation, how long will partylessness based on corruption stand."³⁸

International Support

The MRD in Nepal got widespread humanitarian and political support from the international community, mostly from non-governmental sectors. Almost all papers and magazines that have world-wide circulations gave coverage to the events in Nepal. Similarly the electronic media, especially the BBC and the VOA helped to internationalize the domestic riots in Nepal by highlighting day-to-day developments. Amnesty International and other human rights organizations also forcefully reiterated their concern over the violation of human rights in Nepal. The MRD was further buttressed by the Socialist International, political parties in different countries associated with the Socialist International and by the Association of Asian Students, all of whom declared their impassioned solidarity with the struggle of the Nepalese people.

In regard to government level support, some of the major countries of the world, especially the western countries, voiced their concern for human rights and democracy in Nepal. It was believed that they warned HMG, through diplomatic channels, the possible consequences of the excessive use of force. Besides, in response to the appeal of party leaders and intellectuals to stop economic aid for the PS, Switzerland and West Germany decided to suspend their assistance to Nepal. Except Japan, none of the donor countries and agencies provided any aid to Nepal during the days of the movement. However, as best they as could, some of the western countries made an attempt to compromise between the establishment and the opposition. In the Nepalese media, it was reported that the British and Danish Ambassadors specifically worked for this purpose. Interestingly there was a marked similarity between the Soviet Union's approach with that of the West. On

one occasion Radio Moscow suggested that both the panchas and opposition parties should resolve the problem through mutual accommodation and mutual understanding.

The US and MRD in Nepal

The US was the first country that explicitly called for a compromise between the panchayat regime and opposition, and at the same time it granted a constant humanitarian support to the MRD in Nepal. Within four days of the agitation, the US government, a group of Congress members and Asia Watch, a human rights organization, put pressure on HMG to avoid the excessive use of force. Above all, six influential members of the US Congress in a joint letter to King Birendra voiced their political support to the democratic movement in Nepal stating, "While we understand there are strong differences of opinion in Nepal on the issue of a multi-party system, we believe that all persons should have the right to express their opinion on this and other political issues."³⁹ The US's stand was however ambiguous. On the one hand, from the beginning to the end of the movement, John Kelly, the assistant Secretary of the State Department, forthrightly reiterated the US support to "freedom of expression" and "respect for human rights". But after the unprovoked massacre of more than a dozen freedom fighters, the same official shockingly remarked that his government appreciated the patience shown by the Nepali police to control the opposition's demonstrations. Besides he used the phrases such as "the verdict of the referendum", "traditional Nepalese way of ruling", "internal affairs of Nepal", when Stephen Solarz asked him to clarify the reluctance of the Bush administration to support the MPS in Nepal. Mr. Kelly further stated, "We certainly support parliamentary democracy, but as to the organization of a party system certainly there has to be room around the world for flexibility and countries have to decide their own path... We are not the judge of the world."⁴⁰ The US government again changed its stand when the movement reached its climax. In contradiction to the earlier approach, the spokesman of the US government insisted, "The US never supported one-party or a partyless system. It was in favour of establishing human rights and freedom of political organization and political freedom."⁴¹ Whether it was because of the US's good relations with both sides, the King and the Congress, or because of its scepticism regarding the success of the movement, or because of its apprehension of being caught on the wrong foot. The flip flop in US stand could hardly be said to be behaving a forthright champion of democracy in the world.

India and MRD in Nepal

India role vis-a-vis the democratic movement in Nepal was distinctly divided and ambiguous. At popular and party levels, it provided active support, but the Indian government steadfastly followed a "non-interference" approach. The V.P. Singh government did not support the movement. It was partly because of increasing rapprochement between the government of both countries and Nepal government's willingness to respect Indian sensitivities and also partly because of India's doubt of the success of the MRD in Nepal. A Nepali scholar who was in Delhi in the first half of the movement and also the NC activists who stayed in India to mobilize public support found that journalists, bureaucrats and intellectuals of India were skeptical of the success of the struggle of Nepalese people against the PS.⁴² Moreover, the government of India was really in a dilemma owing to the polarization between two wings of the government: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) versus the rest. The BJP, one of the dominant political forces in India, was a naturally of the Hindu Kingdom and its Hindu sovereign. On the issue of sending an Indian government delegation to Nepal, when the MRD had already been launched, 60 MPs, mostly from BJP, issued a joint statement urging the early conclusion of a treaty with Nepal. To counter this line, 207 MPs issued their own statement supporting the struggle of the Nepalese people against the PS. Moreover Chandra Shaker warned, "If you can sign the agreement (with Nepal) by-passing the people then this sovereign parliament has every right to reject that as well."⁴³ Despite the opposition from a majority in the house, an Indian delegation visited Nepal on April 2, to advance the negotiation between the two countries. This delegation handed over a 80 page document which identified India's security sensitivities under five headings: joint Indo-Nepal surveillance of the border between Nepal and Tibet; training of Nepalese military personnel by India alone; no foreign aid project along the open 500 mile Nepal-India border without Indian concurrence; binding respect to property right of Indians in Nepal; and Nepali laws, not in conformity with the 1950 treaty to be terminated.⁴⁴ From this document one could easily assume that the sole objective of Delhi's non-interference approach was directed to extract maximum concessions from the government of Nepal at the time of instability in the country. However looking at things from another perspective, it can be said that the government of India deliberately confined the process of negotiation with Nepal to the bureaucratic level and also consciously delayed the resolution of the bilateral problems despite both countries's agreement to respect each other's sensitivities on the Delhi visit of the then foreign minister of Nepal in January 1990. India's approach of non-interference in the battle between the panchayat regime and the people of Nepal was cast in favour of the regime, and it did help the regime to deal with the opposition. However,

India's stance disappointed the political parties of Nepal and India. G.M. Singh, reacted angrily, "We agree that it is not possible for India to distance itself totally from the government of Nepal. The problem is India has done nothing for us."⁴⁵ More vocally, Chandra Shekhar alleged, "India was helping a "Shahenshah" in Nepal like the US once had in Iran."⁴⁶

There was, however, consensus among the people and parties of India in support of MRD in Nepal. An Indian MP, M.J. Akbar was of the view that "It was terrible mistake to compromise on fundamentals no matter what they excuse; Indians and even Indian national interest could better be served by a commitment to democracy rather than a commitment to mere set of rulers perceived to be friendly."⁴⁷ Even the BJP could not deviate formally from this broader consensus supporting the MRD in Nepal, though many of its leaders, directly or indirectly, revealed their sympathy to the King's regime. The party Secretary of BJP, J.P. Mathur, issued a statement that, "In full sympathy with the democratic aspirations of the people of Nepal, we in India wish that a multi-party democracy would come to prevail within constitutional monarchy in Nepal."⁴⁸ Other political parties, Janata Party, Janata Dal, congress (I), CPI and CPM, independently or collectively, exerted pressure on their government to assist the movement in Nepal and condemned HMG for state repression of a peaceful movement. To uplift the morale and spirit of the movement, they displayed solidarity through demonstrations on the streets of Delhi, picketing at the Nepalese embassy, blocking the border on one occasion, opening refugee camps, etc.

In fact, the MRD in Nepal did not receive direct government level support from abroad. But concern showed by many countries on the issue of human rights in Nepal and also their condemnation of the use of the force by HMG on the peaceful movement contributed to the fall of the 30 year-old PS. However impassioned solidarity with the MRD in Nepal given by various non-government organizations of the world helped a lot in mobilizing international opinion in favour of the anti-panchayat struggle. The overall sympathy and support received by the movement in Nepal from the international community was highly significant in achieving the target of the movement: the fall of the PS and restoration of multi-party democracy.

Epilogue

The MPS was restored and the leaders also called off the movement. Yet there followed a week of significant and fast developments before the future course of Nepali politics became clear. The seating of the 4 leaders of the movement and all 4 members of the Chand cabinet on either side of the King during the meeting at the palace was in contrast to the hooting which greeted G.P. Koirala the next day at the open-theatre when he remarked

conciliatorily that what the people had achieved was a "victory of the people as well as the panchas and the King." The two events symbolised the divergent attitudes between the palace and the people and also between the party leadership and the general people regarding the final result of the movement. The high expectations of the people uncompromisingly voiced worked as a driving force to quickly transfer the power from the palace to the people. On victory day, April 9, party leaders read the sign of jubilation as well as dissatisfaction on the people's faces. Speaking at the open-theatre, all Congress and Communist leaders, including those who called off the movement the previous night, spoke in the same vein and spirit stressing that the movement had completed one phase gaining partial success, and that it would continue further but by different methods. G.M. Singh argued that the removal of the ban on parties was a "step forward in opening the door to democracy." J.N. Khanal, representative of the ML sought the continuation of the struggle for safeguarding the freedom of party politics. It was, in fact, the living revolutionary spirit of the people that prompt the parties to go beyond the stated objectives of the movement. The NC and the ULF, therefore, called for the immediate fulfillment of 8 demands. They included dissolution of the NP and the Council of Ministers, formation of an interim government, dissolution of all panchayat units, proper representation of the NC and the ULF in the proposed constitutional reform commission, etc. Aiming for complete abolition of the PS, the people encircled the Academy Hall, where the last round of talks was going on between the panchas and the opposition on April 15. These developments dashed the hopes of the palace which thought that it could accommodate the panchas as a living political force within the framework of the minimal objectives of the movement. The King was seeking to protect the panchas and had wanted to use the Chand government as the interim government for this purpose. The haste shown in the withdrawal of suspension of Hari Bol Bhattarai and Tirtha Ram and others who were suspended from their posts because of their boycott of Constitution Day in 1987, together with the convening of meetings of different NP's committees on April 15 indicated the intentions of the palace regarding the survival of the panchas in a new guise.

Lokendra Bahadur Chand, the then PM, in his first meeting with the press after the removal of the ban on parties, claimed that his cabinet was the interim government and declared that people from the multi-party side would be accommodated in his cabinet and also in the forthcoming constitutional reform committee.⁴⁹ Furthermore, he stated that the proposed reforms in the constitution would be directed towards the building of "pluralistic democracy" and avoided to use the term of the multi-party system. But all these efforts proved in vain against the people's determination to abolish the PS

altogether. After the Academy Hall incident L.B. Chand resigned from his post on April 18 and the King accepted the proposal of G.M. Singh to appoint K.P. Bhattarai as the PM of the interim government.

The formation of a coalition government including the representatives of the King, the NC and ULF marked culminating as well as a turning point in the politics of Nepal. At the oath taking ceremony of new council of Ministers, Ganesh Man Singh, The commander of mass movement, emphasised the continuation of unity between the Congress and the Communists to preserve and promote newly achieved democracy in Nepal. In the way of consolidating the achievement of mass movement, Prime Minister K.P. Bhattari gave priority to frame a democratic constitution and to hold impartial election.

Notes

1. The ULF, formed on January 15, 1990 consists of seven communist parties: Marxist, ML, Fourth Convention, Verma, Manandhar, Amatya, and Rohit groups.
2. *Samikshya Weekly*, March 9, 1990.
3. *Be Deplore and Condemn to Anti-National* (Published in Nepali) January 28, 1990.
4. *Pamphlets* (in Nepali) jointly signed by Marshal J. Shakya (NC) and Radha K. Mainali (ULF) and Jag Nath Acharya (NC) and R.K. Mainali, March 5, 1990.
5. Derek Brown, "Nepal Land of the Mid-night Knock" *Guardian*, March 24, 1990.
6. *South China Morning Post*, March 12, 1990.
7. *Tape-Records of the addresses of National and Indian Leaders in the Conferance of the NC, January 18, 1990.*
8. *Interview with Shyam Kaju*, a member of the central committee of the ULF (Who represented the Rohit group), July 18, 1990.
9. *Nepal Press Digest*, Vol 33, No. 52, December 25, 1989.
10. Ganesh Man Singh, *Why People Movement* (Booklet in Nepali).
11. B.P. Koirala, "Revolution in the Context of Nation Building", (Nepali), *Tarun*, reprint in, *Nation, Nationalism and Democracy*, (Booklet in Nepali) 1990, P. 15.
12. *Sort of Reconciliation: Nationalism and Democracy* (Booklet in Nepali), 1981, p. 12.
13. Lok Raj Baral, "Political Dissent and Political Development", Paper presented at the Seminar on *Political Development and Social Change in Nepal*, Kathmandu, December 1986, p. 5.

14. Lok Raj Baral, *Nepal's Politics of Referendum*, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1983, p. 104.
15. Lok Raj Baral, "Nepal in 1986: Problem of Political Management" *Asian Survey*, February 1987, P. 174.
16. There were a number of restrictive provisions in the constitution such as the arrangement of a co-ordination council as a super cabinet, the revival of the BVNC in the modified guise of the Panchayat Policy and Investigation Committee, 25 percent royal nominees out of the total members of the NP, requirement for membership of any class organization to qualify as a candidate, the wording of the prescribed oath etc.
17. Some of the major demands put forward by the NC as precondition for its participation in elections were: interim government, a single manifesto and the same symbol to pro-party candidates, campaign in name of the party, removal of the compulsion of the membership of a class organization etc.
18. *Nepal Press Digest*, Vol 31, No. 46, November 16, 1987.
19. *Text of the Situational Paper (Nepali) presented by G.P. Koirala at the conferance of the NC on January 18, 1990.*
20. *Nepal Press Digest*, Vol 26, No. 22, May 31, 1982.
21. *Nepal Press Digest*, Vol. 28, No. 8, February 27, 1984; Vol. 29, No. 10, March 12, 1985.
22. Five left groups consisting of Man Mohan, Tulsi Lal, Verma, Rohit and Nirmal Lama factions unitedly launched a "political movement" in complement to the NC's Satyagraha, on the basis of unity in action.
23. Part of the national reconciliation policy of B.P. Koirala was perceived as anti-communist strategy, but once he stated "I am ready to live together with them (communists) if they accept the multi-party system and put their faith in it," *Punarjagran*, Push, 2038 (1981).
24. *Informal talks with Ghana Shyam Bhusal (April 20, 1990) the present Secretary of the Central Committee of the ANNSU (Student Wing of the ML) and the former president of the ANNSU, February 25, 1990.*
25. *Nepal Press Digest*, Vol 33, No. 23, October 23, 1989.
26. *Interview with Bal Krishna Khand, the president of the Central Committee of the NSU, Student Wing of the NC, March 15, 1990.*
27. Devendra Raj Panday, "The State of Political Economy", Kamal P. Malla, ed, *Nepal: Perspectives on Continuity and Change*, CNAS, TU, Kathmandu, 1989, p. 321.
28. *Nepal Press Digest*, Vol. 31, No. 36, September 7, 1987.

29. *Interview with a member of the NP, D.P. Adhikari after his resignation from the NP, March 20, 1990.*
30. "Introduction", J.A. Goldstone, ed, *Revolution: Theoretical, Comparative, and Historical Studies*, Harcourt B.J. Publishers, US, 1986, p. 6
31. *Ibid*, p. 12.
32. Sukh Dev Shah, "Nepal's Economic Development: Problems and Prospects", *Asian Survey*, September 1988, p. 945.
33. *The State of the Present Economy*, Ministry of Finance, May 1990.
34. *Nepal Press Digest*, Vol 33, No. 19, May 8, 1989.
35. *Interview with Hemanta Rana*, The then Secretary of the Association of Lecturers, March 25, 1990.
36. Dhruva Kumar, "Beyond Blockade: Some Long Term Policy Consideration for Nepal", *CNAS forum 10*, October 1989, p. 17.
37. *Op. Cit 7.*
38. *Ibid.*
39. *Text of the Letter jointly sent by Six members of the US Congress to King Birendra*, February 22, 1990.
40. *Text of the Statement of John Kelly in Regard to the US stand on the MRD in Nepal*, March 16, 1990.
41. *Nawaras Weekly*, April 4, 1990.
42. *Informal talk with Dhruva Kumar, Hari Sharma, Kishore Nepal, Kausal Raj Regmi*, April 1990.
43. *Telegraph*, March 31, 1990.
44. Bhabani Sen Gupta. *The Hindustan Times*, May 14, 1990.
45. *India Today*, March 15, 1990.
46. *Op. Cit 43.*
47. *Op. Cit 7.*
48. *Text of the Statement of the Secretary of the BJP*, n.a.
49. *The Rising Nepal*, April 10, 1990.

BOOK REVIEW

Stolen Images of Nepal. 1989. Lain S. Bangdel. Kathmandu: Royal Nepal Academy. Pages 328. Price Rupees 850.

This is a laudable enterprise, and the outcome of a fruitful collaboration between individual and institutions. The Toyota Foundation, Tokyo, which financed the project, deserves our warm appreciation for lending support to a much needed work not a day too soon. Similarly our unfailing gratitude must also go to Mr. Bangdel who has done a good job of authoring and documenting it. Finally, our kudos to the Royal Nepal Academy, which has brought out the work in an impressive format, achieving a higher standard of printing and a technical finesse in its publications unknown hitherto.

As it should become amply clear from the title, the book presents a good documentation of the harrowing tale of idol-theft in Nepal. To follow Bangdel, the trend in this crime started in the mid-60s, which increased substantially in the '70s, and peaked to an unprecedented new scale in the '80s. If this trend were to continue unabated, Nepal in an imaginable future will be completely denuded of its priceless cultural heritage. It is true that art-theft is not a problem that afflicts only Nepal. But certain aspects of it are the most disturbing, perhaps even unique to it. What Nepal has been losing is not merely its second grade art. It has either already lost or attempts at robbery made against some of the most leading specimens and perhaps the only examples of their kind in the domain of sculptural art. Attempts to steal the famous Varaha image at Dhumvarahi were made in 1983 (pls. 211 and 212), after chipping off the smaller figure of the Earth goddess forming an integral part of this single-stone sculpture earlier. It is this kind of degradation that goes on without any check. The concerned government agencies and the so-called NGOs, supposedly engaged in heritage conservation work, have done precious little to thwart this trend. The tale of theft is even more depressing in the case of bronzes and thangkas, which is not, however, within the scope of the present book. What makes this fact most glaring is that today all the best and the oldest examples of this latter art-form of Nepal can be found only in the museums and the alcoves of the private collectors abroad. Nepal's museums have to be content only with their second rate examples collected in their shelves.

The book is primarily a documentation of photographs--mostly half-tones with a few polychrome prints--of stone images of Hindu and Buddhist deities which have been stolen at different dates over the past two decades and a half, and of those few images which luckily could be rescued from robbery--attempts, or of those others, which were abandoned in this attempt and found later through sheer chance. What leaves the heart of art-lovers massively bleeding is to see how grossly and in a bizarre way attempts at robbery of some of these sculptures have sometimes been made. Images are taken apiece by chopping off their heads or other parts (pls. 190-91; 193-94 and 211-12). In one or two instances the figure-reliefs have even been sawn off their stele-base, obviously to make them light and facilitate their concealed transportability (pls. 196, 197). One cannot sometimes help wishing that these thieves had been a little more considerate and caring towards their victims. What this book has compiled may not be a complete account. Yet this is the first visual and authentic record of the stolen images in and around the Kathmandu Valley to come out of Nepal with the efforts of a Nepali. Over 130 cases of such missing sculptures have been reported in the book with their exact or approximate date of disappearance or attempted robbery. Photographs of sculptures serving as illustrations are not of the highest quality always, still they are rendered in large size, running to full or half a page of a large-format book (8" x 11"). Illustrations include empty sockets, bases, pedestals, walls or niches where these sculptures had originally lain and from where they have now been removed. It has helped to enhance and dramatise the effect. There is a 20-page text by way of a general introduction, and a commentary on Nepal and its art in addition to a short iconographic note to accompany each of these images individually. The author surprisingly uses the past tense in describing this iconography which sounds even more chilling in effect. It is not as though they may still be existing somewhere, if not in Nepal, and will surface one day. It appears as though they are lost to mankind for ever.

We may hope that the publication of the book helps in bringing the problem of art-theft in Nepal into focus. This problem gets linked with a host of other issues that could have social, legal, moral and educational implications. Only an increased and enlightened public response and active participation of the people can act as the most effective bulwark to this problem. So long as the country and each one of the community endowed with this wealth of heritage does not realize the full value of it, and learn to accord it proper respect and protection, nothing useful can happen. A mere dumb worship of these images will not be enough, since mere faith of the worshipper has been proven quite unable to give proper protection to these deities any longer now. A heritage education imparted to the community has become a highly urgent task. People at the grassroots level must be educated

about it. A comprehensive plan should be drawn up in this regard, in my opinion. This should go hand in hand with adequate legislation and strengthening of laws in the protection of heritage. We do know of many instances in which the community has been aroused to act on its own in the face of gross apathy and negligence shown by the concerned public and private agencies. Public zeal has succeeded in thwarting the design of the thieves on many occasions. In their sheer helplessness they have responded to this problem by putting deities in iron chains, shutting them behind iron-grilles, or plastering them with cement. This, however, is a very crude method of rendering protection to them, which spoils the aesthetics, grace and dignity of these sculptures. A balance has to be struck between caution and apprehension somewhere.

The other unfortunate side of this problem is that international conventions on the protection of national arts from theft are not adequate. Under the existing provisions, it is quite difficult to ensure their speedy return. Countries buying the art of other countries on a big scale do not want to know in what way and by what means such arts have come to reach their art-markets. They have no laws in their own countries which could offer some form of guarantee against the art-theft in other countries, nor anything to discourage them from leaving their country illegally. Nonetheless, the preparation of an inventory of this sort is the first step on the basis of which any claim to recover one's national art might be made, when this should be possible to do one day.

Art-dealers, private collectors of art, art-museums and scholars in the West seem to belong to a charmed circle of mutual admirers. They arrange occasions to assemble and to get together amongst themselves over lectures on the art of the mystical orient. Their experts and exponents take this enraptured audience down an aesthetic journey and through an ecstatic experience on a discourse of spiritual art during their lectures. But who does not know that in the real world of art the true moving spirit and driving force is not feelings but money. One cannot sometimes help thinking how ironical in effect such lectures delivered in the distant shores of the West can actually be as they could shake images from their very foundations by unleashing a new wave of art-theft in countries like Nepal.

One would have wished that Bangdel had raised some of these issues at some length lending this problem a greater force and urgency. His conclusions on this matter are too facile, barely running to 165 words. Nonetheless, this does little to diminish the importance of the publication. We do hope that with the publication of Bangdel's book people are moved to act with greater speed and concern in the protection and conservation of their artistic heritage.

— Prayag Raj Sharma

REVIEW ARTICLE

Himalayan Voices: An Introduction to Modern Nepali Literature.
1991. Michael James Hutt. 33 pages. Berkley, Los Angeles, Oxford:
University of California Press. Price- Not mentioned.

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This book is undoubtedly the most comprehensive single collection of translations of Nepali poems and stories by a native English scholar who knows the language well, and personally knows most of the writers and poets. Michael Hutt's formal degree in Nepali literature-he holds a Ph. D. in Nepali literature from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), and his continuity as a lecturer in Nepali at London University, makes his selection of the poems and stories he has translated relevant and significant.

Michael Hutt has translated the works of many poets and short story writers of Nepali who have never been translated before, but works of some of them have been the subject of interest for many western scholars prior to his translation of their works. Laxmi Prasad Devkota, the most celebrated Nepali poet, is one such example. Devkota's poems have been translated by foreign, especially American scholars. David Rubin's translation of his poems and essays published in a book form entitled *Nepali Visions Nepali Dreams: The poetry of Laxmi Parasad Devkota* is the most well-known example.¹ Other poets have been translated but the translations have either not been very successful, or even if they were successful have not appeared in any well-known collections.

Translation of Nepali writers and poets in English has been a subject of interest even among the Nepali writers themselves. The desire to be known outside Nepal has been quite as strong as being familiar with the literatures written in foreign languages, especially English and French from the west, and Bengali and Hindi from the Indian subcontinent. But it was assumed that an English translation of Nepali literary text would be read by the interested educated people of this part of the world and outside. The greatest native translator of Nepali poems into English was poet Laxmi

Prasad Devkota himself, who in his introduction to the English translation of the well-known Nepali poems as early as 1956, six years after Nepal opened its doors to the wide world, says:

The present translations are in English, because of its extensive use in India, especially in the Deccan and the different parts of Asia and the world.²

Devkota introducing his method of translation says:

The poems selected have been published side by side with their English renderings, in which, as far as possible, the original has been strictly followed within the *Limits set by the difference in the genius of the two different languages.* (My emphasis)³

Michael Hutt's translation of Devkota's poems and Devkota's own translation of the same poems in English has presented us with some interesting revelations regarding the translation of poems in a foreign language. These revelations deserve some mention. They could be considered in the light of the translation as a creative practice, and also as an endeavour to break "the limits set by the difference in the genius of the two different language." In the context of the spread and recognition of the English as a language employed by non-native writers all over the world today, Devakota's use of English language for creative rendering of his poems has a special significance, a subject that requires a different treatment than we are prepared to consider here.⁴ But I would like to review Hutt's translation by using the late Devakota's own translations of his as well as his fellow poets' poems in English alongside Michael Hutt's translation of the same poems. I can only present a few samples. The question involved in this comparison is not English, because a non-native user of language can never use the language in the same way as the native speaker uses it. But the very fact that Devakota's translation is very close to Nepali and that he has the concept of his and his native poets' sense of value which he would like to convey through the translations, is a matter of interest here. What Hutt has chosen to do for the advantage of the native English readers, and what compromises and changes he has made and, in other words, what involves in the translation of the foreign literature, also become obvious through this comparison. And I think this will be an interesting subject in its own right to consider.

The comparison can reveal important points regarding the study of literary translation as "the process of constant reinterpretation."⁵ Michael Hutt is a good translator with a good command of Nepali language, and Devakota is the most celebrated poet with a good command of English that is

used in this part of the world and has become a variety of English in its own right today, for which reason it cannot be dismissed as being not like that used by the native speakers of English. What did he want to project to the foreign readers and how has that been interpreted by a translator in modern English idiom is a matter of consideration here. The subject under discussion is the poetic polyvalence and how does the translator resolve this polyvalence. And, that is the yardstick for measuring the success of the translation. Hatim and Mason point out that "the translator's task should be to preserve, as far as possible, their range of possible responses; in other words, not to reduce the dynamic role of the reader."⁶ Here the reader in question is the reader of the Nepali text. But the problem arises here. Devkota allows this reader more rooms, more range of possible responses than Michael Hutt, it seems, but that makes his translation like a Nepali reading not a translation, and Hutt's is more communicative and clear. How do we resolve this problem? Anyway, the reader's role is suggested variously in the following translations:

The Lunatic

1. Surely, my friend, insane am I
Such is my plight.
2. I visualize sound.
I hear the visible.
And fragrance I taste.
And the ethereal is palpable to me.
Those things I touch-
Whose existence the world denies
Of whose shape the world is unawares.
I see a flower in the stone--
When wavelet-softened pebbles on the water's edge
In the moonlight,
(Translated by Laxmi Prasad Devkota. His own poem p.64)

Mad

Surely, my friend, I am mad,
That's exactly what I am!

I see sounds,
hear sights,
taste smells,
I touch things thinner than air,
things whose existence the world denies,

things whose shapes the world does not know.
Stones I see as flowers,
pebbles have soft shapes,
water-smoothed at the water's edge
in the moonlight

(Translated by Michael Hutt, p. 53)

The graphological features are important. In Nepali Devkota uses marks of exclamation at the end of every line practically, but in his own translation he uses full stops. Hutt uses commas, Devkota's "I see a flower in the stone" is yet another remarkable point. Another native English speaker translates the same lines like this:

Grazy

1. Oh yes, friend! I'm crazy--
that's just the way I am.
2. I see sounds,
I hear sights,
I taste smell,
I touch not heaven but things from the underworld,
things people do not believe exist,
(Translated by Rubin, p. 148)

Devkota calls his condition a plight, Hutt makes the persons confess that that is precisely what he is, and Rubin makes it a mad persona way of life, a style. In the sixth line he completely misses out the sense.

Some more comparisons of Michael Hutt's translations with those of Devkota's translation of his fellow poet's poems will reveal how a native fellow poet's interpretation tends to differ with that made by a foreign language scholar. Kedar Man Vyathit's poem is translated here:

The Storm

Scattering to the end of all directions,
The notes of his martial song,
The dark forbidding cloud
Is singing.
Like the all-destructive Bhairav--
The God of Terror--
The frenzied storm
Is dancing.

(Translated by Devkota, p 126)

The Storm

The black cloud sang,
spreading the voice of thunder
to the horizon's end,
and the crazy storm danced
like a destructive god.

(Translated by Michael Hutt, p 70)

Hutt has missed out a very important allusion that of Bhairabha, and has translated the present tense in the Nepali text into the past tense form because in both cases he has interpreted the text as a self-contained coherent discourse because the poet recalls this stormy experience in the aftermath of the storm, but in Nepali reading which Devkota directly translated into the present tense, the psychological dimension of the storm is stressed in terms of time and space. In yet another poem of Vyathit himself entitled "Kamila", the study yields even more interesting results:

Ants

Emerging like comets from the dark holes in the sky,
Chains of ants are running,
Hurry scurry, helter skelter,
In a desert garden.
They seem to be singing the anguish of the dewdrop,
On the grassplot of desire.

(Translated by Devkota, p 114)

Ants

Coming from a dark hole,
A comet in the night sky
singing, anxious for drops of water,
in a straw-filled yard of thirst:
a line of ants, confused, confused,
running through the garden.

(Translated by Hutt, p 169)

Nepali poems use onomatopoeic sounds. In the Nepali version, the expression *sambhram sambhram* shows the movements of the ants, which Devkota translates as 'hurry scurry, helter skelter'. I can not check whether this translation means anything to the native English readers, but Hutt has missed that completely and translated it as 'confused, confused.' As a native Nepali reader I feel closer to the expressions, 'the anguish of the dewdrop' and

'the grassplot of desire' because that is what I have read in Nepali, but in Hutt's translation which is very communicative, idiomatic and simple, I miss that polyvalence.

Another area of difficulty, as Hutt has confessed, is the metrical verses. But Hutt's translation of Lekhnath's "*Pinjarako suga*" is convincing and authentic. But in the translation of both the classical, romantic and modern Nepali poems, Micheal Hutt has, I had not quite realized that when I was reading them in the manuscript form, opted too much for more easy and communicative aspects of the language of translation. He has not, in spite of his very good knowledge of Nepali, ventured to translate the creative dismantling of structures and deviant collocational uses made by the Nepali poets as part of their creative anxiety. He has upheld the virtue of clarity and straight communication. He has resolved the polyvalence of Nepali poems by strictly following the method of translating the poem clearly, and as far as possible, projecting one dominant sense. It seems, I will be one of the very few readers of his work who will be demanding from him a little more adventure, but he will be judged by critics here by whether he has been a very clear and direct translator or not, as the past experience has shown.

He has given his criteria of selecting the poems for translation (p xi-xii). He has relied on the well-known anthologies, and more importantly, his own likings of the poems. That is why perhaps, we do not find a clear grouping of the poets of the generations and trends in a manner that would give a picture to the foreign readers of a sense of tradition in Nepali poetry. He could in fact, have written an introduction, a scholar of Nepali literature that he is, about the various modes of writings and the nature of the traditions, filling up the gaps in his selection of poems by giving at least the names of the important poets of different generations that he has left out. Without such an introduction his selection and introductions suffer from a certain sense of randomness which an authority of the subject like him could have easily avoided. But his introductions to individual poets are useful and interesting. In the course of the introduction he has made several casual remarks like, "During the 1960s, Nepali poetry seemed divorced from the realities of the society that produced it," (p 15)," he (Ashesh Malla) continues a style of verse that was first made popular by Gopalprasad Rimal" (p 153), and "his (Avinash Shrestha's) work has caused a stir in Kathmandu literary circles." (p 157).

The poets of the sixties were not divorced from the realities, but their mode of response had changed. They were closely reacting to it. To quote from his translation of one of the most influential poets of the sixties:

The serpent cannot find

the bullets in Gandhi's breast,
 the *khari* tree on the Tundikhel,
 the nails in the lane of Jerusalem,
 again it wanders in suicide

(Bairagi Kanhila, "People Shopping..." p 109)

In fact, the Nepali version conveys a sense that the *tashyak* or the serpent actually gets furious by not being able to track down the crimes committed at various times in human history, directly referring to the crushing of democracy in Nepal, symbolically by cutting down the *Khari* tree, the symbol of *agora* in Kathmandu, a place of public speeches and meetings. The contemporaries of Kanhila whose poems have not been included in the collection give powerful expressions to the mood of discontent of that period. Ashesh Malla alone does not use Rimal's style, and Avinash writes poems but they have not caused stir in Kathmandu.

The second section of the book features representative Nepali stories of the modern times. Though Hutt has selected the well-known story writers, a certain randomness appears here again for the same reason as mentioned in connection with the tradition of poetry writing in Nepali. In the selection there is a jump in time and place. His introduction to the development of the short stories is very well written and full of information, if not very comprehensive and analytical. Micheal Hutt's translation of short stories are authentic, I can say even more authentic than his translation of poems.

The translation on the whole is the most authentic one produced by a native English speaker to date. But the poems would have been more authentic if he had read them through with a native scholar or a writer. (I must confess that I have read several of them with him, especially Mohan Koirala's poems, at his beautiful house in Tring, Hertfordshire). Some errors like the translation of *Dvija* as 'Vaishya caste' and 'vishudai' as 'a woman's name' are two such examples that I have noticed. *Dvija* is a Sanskrit word used in Nepali which means a Brahmin, twice born because he becomes a true Brahmin after wearing the holy thread, and 'Vishudai' means brother Vishu not 'a woman's name.'

Micheal Hutt has done a great service to Nepali literature by introducing its writers and their works to the world through the medium of English. The task of improving, writing more with dedication and widening the horizons of their thinking and imagination is entirely their responsibility. No translator before had presented so many pieces of Nepali writings in one volume published in a western country. As far as my knowledge goes this collection is not matched by any other works of this nature in terms of its broad-based approach and the quality of the translation. This book will show

that Nepal has a strong literary tradition and there are a number of poets and writers who write literature as well as poets and writers of other literary traditions, and they have a uniqueness of their own. The bibliography is comprehensive, and the glossary of useful words introduces Nepali culture into the reading of the literature in a subtle manner. The footnotes are helpful. The book has an impressive size and shape, and the printing is attractive. This book is the fruit of Micheal Hutt's several trips to Nepal, hard work, and, above all, his love for Nepali and its literature.

Notes

1. David Rubin, *Nepali Visions, Nepali Dreams: The Poetry of Laxmi Prasad Devkota* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980.)
Rubin has translated the well-known poems, essays and self-reflections of Devkota. In spite of some of the controversial translations, this book remains a pioneering work in this area.
- 2,3. Devkota has translated his own as well as his fellow poets' poems into English in a bi-lingual literary periodical entitled *Indreni*, vol 1 no. 7 1956. These quotations occur on page 174. All of Devkota's translations quoted in this review are taken from this magazine.
4. Braj. B. Kachru, editor, *The Other Tongue* (Oxford, New York: Pergamon Press, 1982). In this book this subject is treated by various writers under different headings, like "English in Non-Native Contexts: Directions and Issues," "Nativization: Formal and Functional," "New English Literatures" etc.
The Pelican Guide to English Literature 8 has for the first time treated the creative writings in English by non-native writers as representing the broad-based history of English literature today.
5. Basil Hatim and Ian Mason, *Discourse and the Translation* (London and New York: Longman, 1990), p 11. This book incorporates the recent research in socio-linguistics, discourse studies, pragmatics and semiotics in the study of translation.
6. *Discourse and the Translation*, p 11.